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# THE ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS.



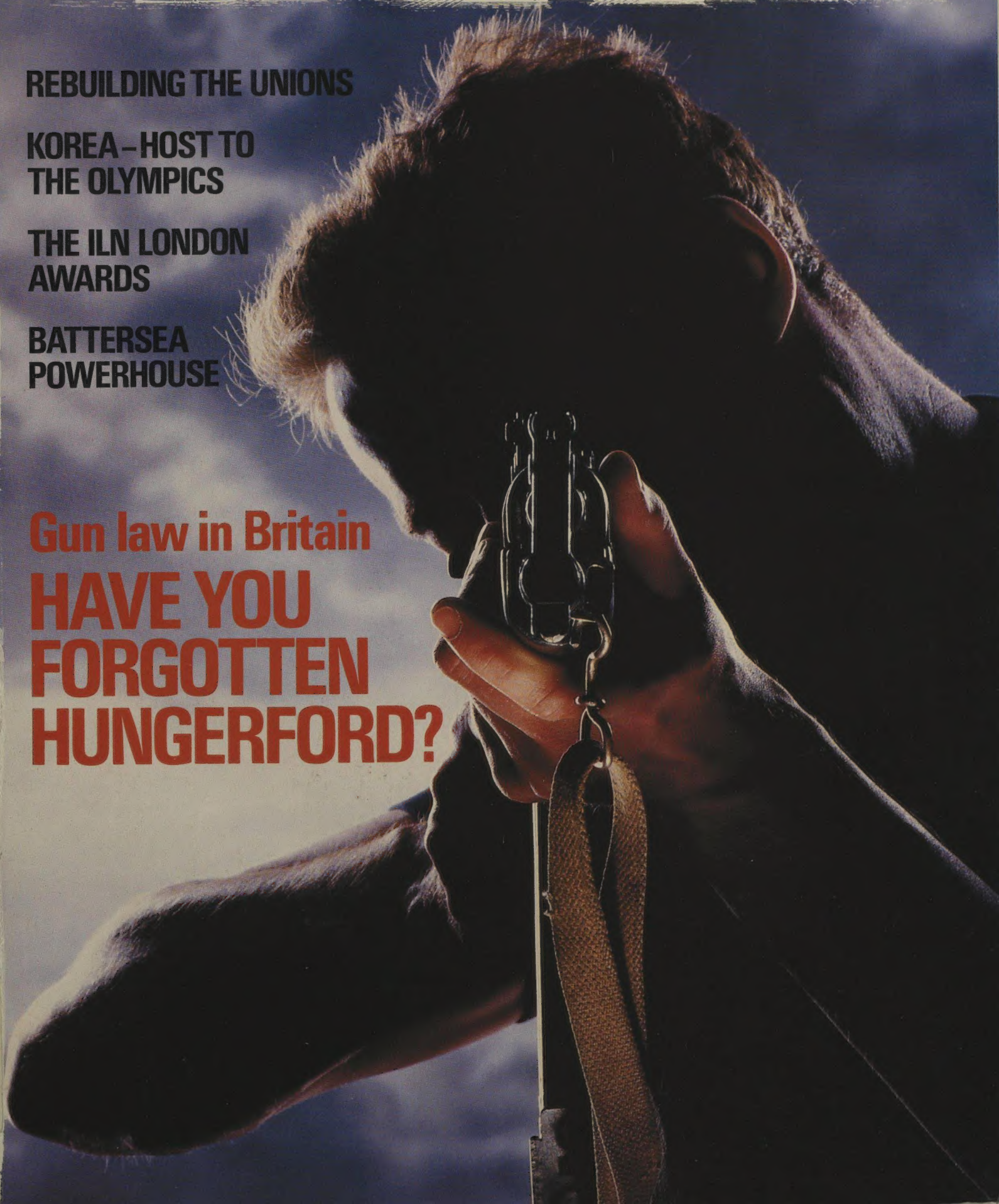
**REBUILDING THE UNIONS**

**KOREA - HOST TO  
THE OLYMPICS**

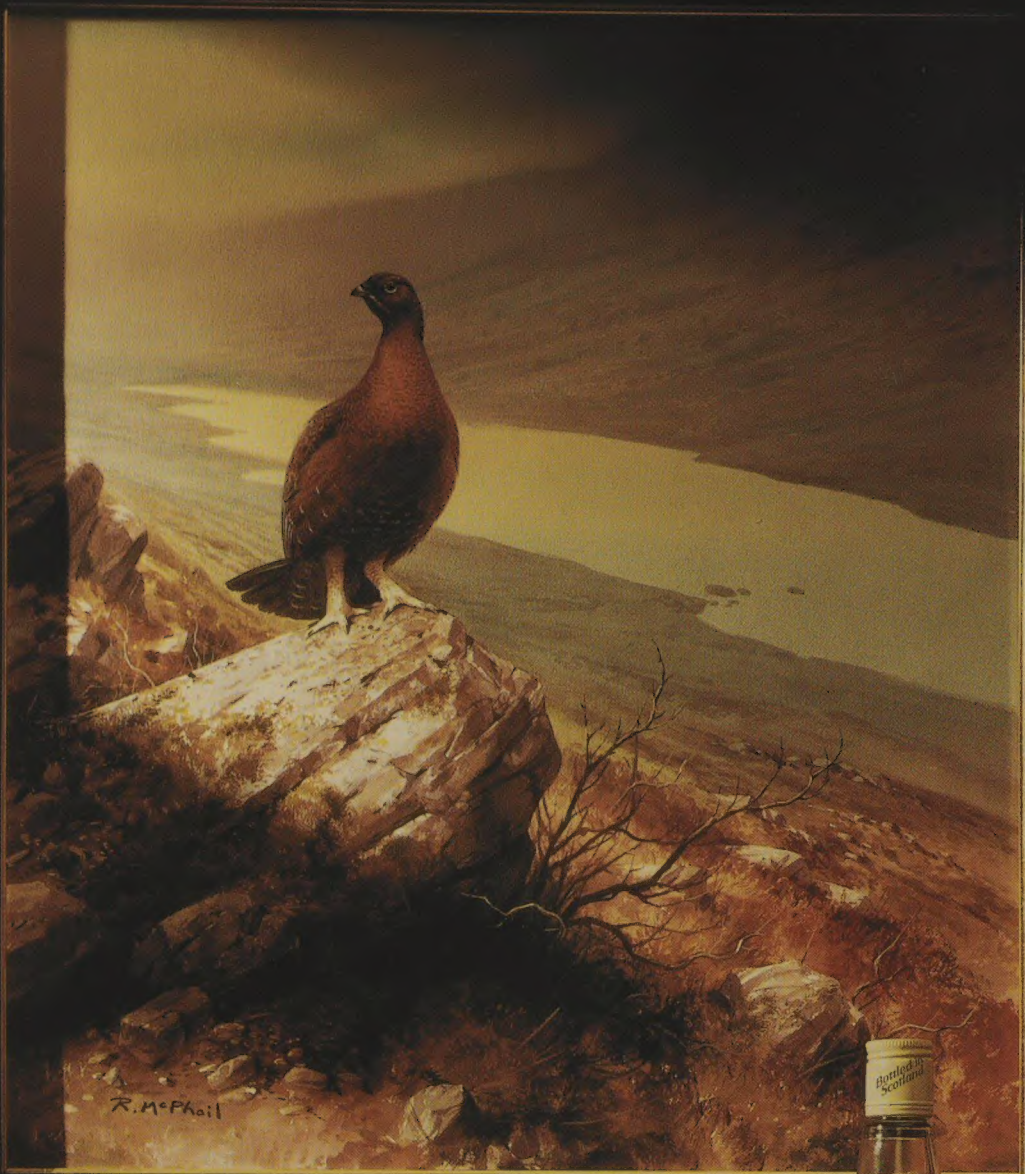
**THE ILN LONDON  
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# THE ILLUSTRATED LONDON NEWS

NUMBER 7081 VOLUME 276 AUGUST 1988

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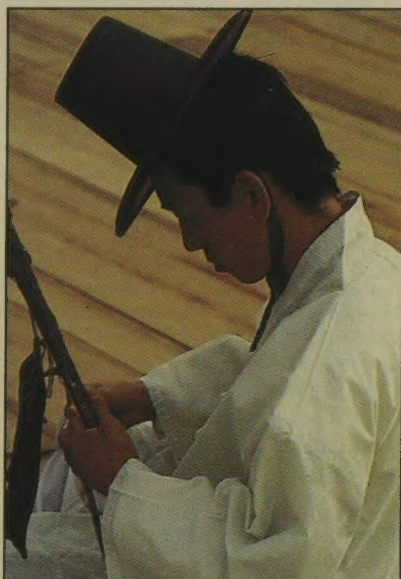
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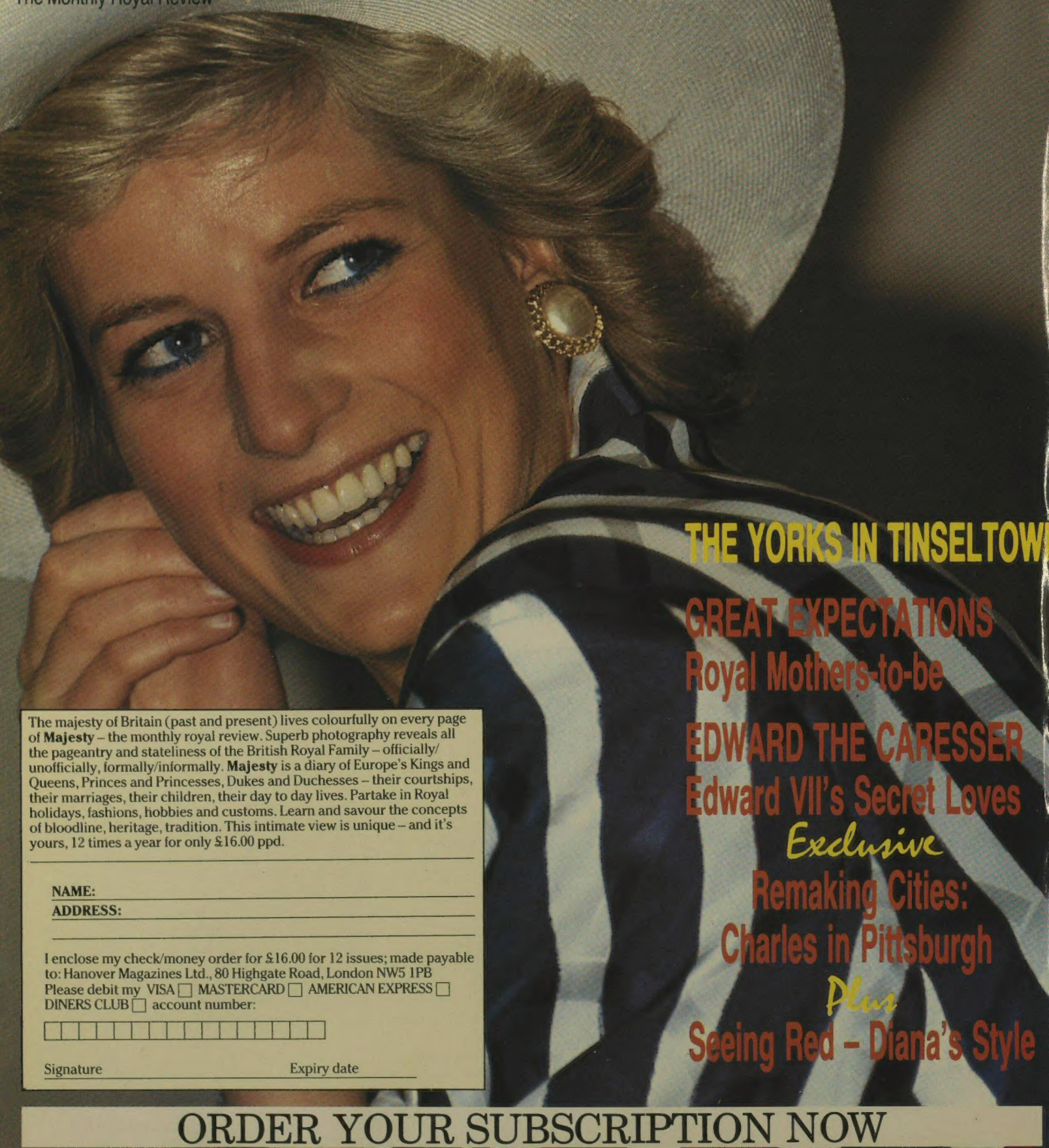
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## Editor's Letter

# THE REALITY OF 1992

The Department of Trade and Industry believes that Britain has more or less got the point about 1992. It has issued a statement which records with quiet pleasure that some 75 per cent of the country has a dim comprehension that after 1992 we shall be able to sell our goods and services with more ease in the EEC.

This is by no means the whole story. For one thing, most businessmen have grasped the idea that December 31, 1992 is a sort of wedding-day, on which the betrothed come together to their mutual benefit and everyone lives happily ever after. In fact, the arrangement is more modern than that because the partners are involved in a gradual cohabitation, which means that the mystical date of 1992 is really quite unimportant.

The other, more dangerous misconception is the fault of the DTI, which has chosen to portray this union as being entirely to the advantage of British industry. There is an implication that the whole of Europe is impatiently waiting for truckloads of wonderful British goods. This is not at all the case. While our financial services will move into Europe with efficient gusto, our manufacturing industries will be at great risk from the better-designed, more reliable and more marketable goods being produced in Germany, France and, especially, Italy. This is not something that is going to change completely in three and a half years because the differences in standards and quality often reflect profound differences in culture. The Italian gift for design, for example, cannot easily be aped.

It may be that the civil servants find themselves at a loss to paint an entirely accurate picture because the effects of the single market are so difficult to predict. Certainly continental bureaucrats often express their doubts and ignorance. Most of the regulations are not yet drafted, but when they have been and are then implemented there seems to be a distinct reluctance on the part of the member countries to abide by them. Take the innovation of the single freight-forwarding document, which I know will leave you all breathless with excitement. Until January each country used different forms to accompany their goods abroad. A new standard form was introduced but was sabotaged by the Germans who, for reasons best known to themselves, preferred the old form, perhaps because they knew how to fill it in.

The point is that there is very little to prevent member countries from doing exactly what they want. A great deal of mistrust still exists between the EEC countries and none of them has qualms about going its own way. The very French expression for this flexible attitude to EEC regulations results from this independence. It is "variable geometry".

I prefer the idea of an open marriage in which the parties flout their vows but stay together because of the material benefits of the arrangement. Mrs Thatcher and Lord Young, neither of whom is a natural European, understand this, but the benefits will not come to Britain unless they see 1992 as more than just an export drive. It is also about pre-emptive defence.

The other day I wanted to buy some paint and brushes from a specialist art shop in Victoria called Kemp & Son. I arrived there at 12.45pm on a Saturday, just after the shop had closed. A man inside came to the door and explained that the shop closed early on a Saturday, but he asked if there was anything he could do for me. I immediately realised that Kemp & Son was no ordinary shop. Instead of the usual scowl and ill-tempered gesticulation from behind the closed door, here was a man who actually wanted to help his customer. He had no idea whether I was going to buy one HB pencil and rubber, or a life's supply of sable brushes and canvas. He simply displayed that rarest commodity in London—courtesy. In the event, I made a large purchase which involved the shop-keeper rummaging in his stores for about half-an-hour. He could not have taken more trouble.

The bill came to £150. He was horrified. "My goodness," he said, "that seems far too much—I do apologise." The total was correct, so I asked whether he would like cash or a cheque. The usual response to this question is a flat refusal to accept a cheque for any amount over £50. "Oh, do give me a cheque," he said. "I would hate to leave you without sufficient cash for the weekend."

I do not have to tell people who know London that this behaviour is exceptional. On the previous day I had been sworn at by a cab driver who had refused to change a £10 note, and told to take my business elsewhere when I asked a newsagent for a magazine he did not stock. (He told me that he did not stock it, precisely because people like me came in to ask for it). I was also asked by a man carrying some packing cases to move my "effing arse".

One advantage of closer ties with Europe seems to me to be the civilising influence of the continentals. People on the other side of the Channel are, on the whole, far more polite.



The DTI's logo for 1992

*Tony Price*





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# READERS' LETTERS

## WASTE OF TALENT

I was interested to read your comment on the controversy over Thames Television's report on the killing of the IRA terrorists in Gibraltar (*ILN*, June). What caught my eye was your introduction by way of Orwell. You suggested that Orwell would have been disturbed by the current attacks on the media. That is surely right. But I think Orwell would also have been disturbed by the British media itself.

I'm not taking the government line here, saying the media must be more responsible. I'm saying that the media does not make good use of the freedom it does have—that, even before the current attacks on it, it lacked independence.

Independent journalism—the kind that opens up possibilities and moves a society—is rare anywhere, but it seems particularly rare here. Is this because of British culture? The British I know are among the best-defended individuals in the world. The longer I live here, the more Britain shows itself able to rebuff criticism and resist change.

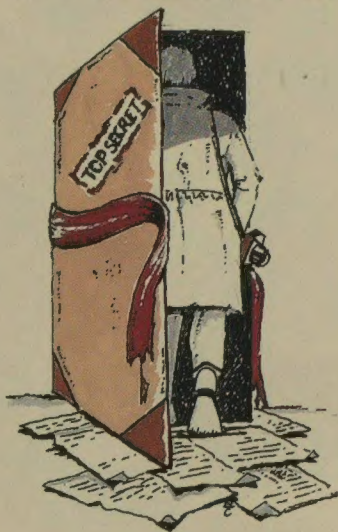
Batting their brains out against this well-defendedness, British journalists waste themselves. Highbrow British journalism is thus static, and achieves its highest expression in intellectual acrobatics or the ventilation of prejudice. My vote is for a return to Orwell's style of subversion. You say that it is neither unpatriotic nor subversive to question the actions of the state. What do you have against subversion? Subversion keeps culture alive. It is thus patriotic.

I'm not talking about the Marxists in the media and elsewhere. I'm talking about the kind of subversion practised by Duncan Campbell, the *New Statesman* & *Society* reporter and moving spirit behind the BBC's *Secret Society* series. Foraging behind Britain's locked doors, Campbell comes up with interesting news—Zircon and all that. But it is not his scoops that make Campbell subversive. It is his will to violate secrecy itself.

In the US, Campbell's scoops would make him a celebrity. In the UK he is an eccentric, and is increasingly silent. Why? Because he enjoys no real support in British society. The British love secrecy, and thus dislike Duncan Camp-

bell, so he is left in the lurch by Britain's highbrows, while ersatz exposers working for the British tabloids serve up a continuing diet of fake—mainly sexual—exposés to Britain's lowbrows.

Britain should forswear not only tabloid sex scandals, but also



intellectual acrobatics and the ventilation of prejudice—in other words, all forms of surrogate release that make emotional repression tolerable. Banning clever reviews and barbed personality profiles, the highbrow British media should recommit itself to the journalistic principles of Orwell: plain-spokenness, honesty, self-examination, liberation.

**Peter Koenig, London N5**

## KNIGHT ERRANT

Why send James Delingpole to the Hippodrome (*ILN*, July) to mix in the suburban society he obviously does not understand?

While the Hippodrome is not the most chic nightclub in London, it provides a good night out and is better than a host of others.

Perhaps a comparative review would have been less damning.

**Ray Jones, Managing Director, Linx Corporation, London W1**

## HOT SALESMAN

We very much enjoyed the article "At the shrine of the Aga" (*ILN*, June), especially the comment about David Ogilvy having one. David was also the premier salesman of Aga stoves in Scotland in the early 1930s. His description of his career with Aga is to be found in his delightful autobiography, *Blood, Brains and Beer*, published in 1978.

**John C. Griggs, Connecticut, USA**

## TERROR RULES

I am astounded by your editorial Question of State (*ILN*, June) as I had considered yours a responsible publication. You state that the main point in the war with terrorists is that it is neither unpatriotic nor subversive to question their deaths while on active duty. The whole point of the Irish Republi-

can Army is that they are at war with all people in the world who stand in their way. Therefore, they kill crowds of civilians in Ireland and Great Britain with hidden bombs; they assassinate, without warning, policemen, informers, postmen, bus-drivers—anyone they consider to be working for the government of Northern Ireland.

There is no death penalty in the United Kingdom or Ireland. Therefore, the IRA can murder with complete safety as, even if they are captured, they can eliminate the witnesses and the judge and escape to the sanctuary of the Republic of Ireland or the United States. Even if they are convicted, they can rest and recuperate in jail, receiving revision training in the latest terrorist tactics while their families are paid directly from the proceeds of bank raids and protection rackets. With remission or escape, they can be back murdering in a couple of years, while their victims are in their graves.

If only the SAS had organised a pre-emptive strike against the person or persons who pressed the button of the radio-controlled bomb in Lord Mountbatten's fishing-boat he, the boatmen, the wives and children would still be alive, working for their communities.

**P. Roberts, Nairobi, Kenya**

*While there is no official shoot-to-kill policy, it is reasonable to expect the security forces to operate within the law. Thus, any accusations that they have not done so must be treated seriously. The ILN simply believes that it is neither subversive nor unpatriotic to examine these accusations.*

## DECEIT OF CUSTOM

I refer to your investigations of London estate agents (*ILN*, July) and thank you for establishing that "Faron Sutaria tried the hardest". It would be nice next time you embark on an investigation if you would do so with a house that was genuinely for sale. That way you would ensure that genuine purchasers were not pointlessly led up the garden path.

Where you have a genuine buyer and a vendor who is a fraud spare a thought, if you will, for the injured party.

**Faron Sutaria, London W11**

## Melting moments

London 100 years ago: *ILN*, August 25, 1888

The notion of modelling our public men in wax, fitting them with the Edison phonograph, and sending them round the country, so that, unlike Sir Boyle Roche, they can be in two places (or even twenty) at once, and address their adherents in "manifold", reflects the greatest credit on its originator. Shakespeare himself only imagined a limited number of Richmonds in the field; but this gentleman has discovered a method of multiplying them indefinitely, and deserves the thanks of a grateful country. It is much easier to hit upon an improvement than to originate an idea; and it is with great humility that I venture to suggest that these duplicated orators should be moulded in some other substance than wax. In the crowded assemblies which they would, without doubt, address, they would be apt to melt, and not only in moments of pathos. It would be a serious blow to the effect of an "indignation speech" to see the orator's ears droop or his nose drop off. . . . Hot weather, too, would have an injurious effect upon him, and a torchlight procession might be his ruin.



THE WESTBURY, LONDON.

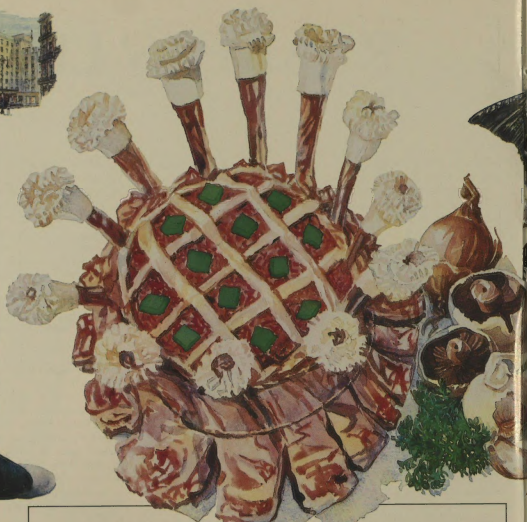


Ringed by Mayfair's quality jewellers, boutiques and art galleries, the Westbury has strong sporting links, particularly in the world of polo and tennis.

The original Westbury Hotel on Madison Avenue was named after the Long Island polo ground.

The Polo Restaurant is in the inspirational hands of the Trusthouse Forte Hotels Chef of the Year.

Not surprisingly, the depth of the wine list is matched by the width and imagination of the modern French menu.



Previously a 15th-century Manor House, now renovated with tact and care. The Shires Restaurant is in a fully restored 17th century barn with a wealth of exposed beams and minstrel gallery: a superb setting to enjoy the best of cuisine.

Alongside the Strout, in some of Kent's most picturesque countryside, Ashford is the perfect location for meetings, just by the M20.



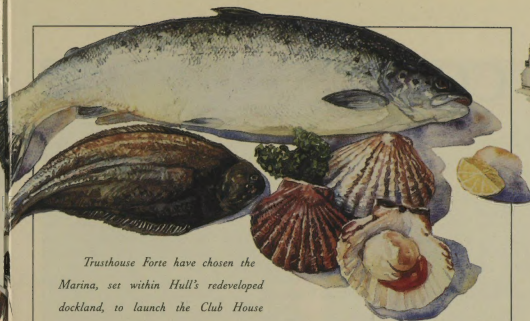
THE POST HOUSE, ASHFORD.

This elegant Georgian building, noted for its fine architecture, dates from the days when the town was a fashionable resort famous for its medical spas.

Originally six private residences dating from 1723, The Francis has retained all the splendour of that gracious era within its spacious well-proportioned rooms decorated in the classical manner to reflect the luxurious style of the 18th century. The hotel makes an ideal touring

base for business in Somerset.

THE FRANCIS, BATH.



Trusthouse Forte have chosen the Marina, set within Hull's redeveloped dockland, to launch the Club House Restaurant. The fish could hardly be fresher. Every day the chef offers the best

of the catch and weather permitting, dining alfresco is offered on the terrace.

The menu is augmented by dishes recommended by chefs of world standing.

THE MARINA, POST HOUSE, HULL.

The way to a businessman's heart is through his stomach.

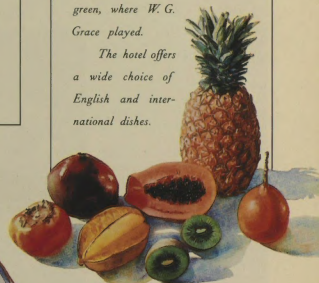


THE ALVESTON POST HOUSE, BRISTOL.

Originally a Tudor Inn, this Post House hotel still conveys the character of a West Country coaching house, steeped in the smuggling folklore of days gone by.

Some of the rooms have wide picture windows and balconies overlooking the Thornbury Cricket green, where W.G. Grace played.

The hotel offers a wide choice of English and international dishes.



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# THE COST OF OIL

**T**he destruction of an Iranian Airbus over the Gulf and of an oil rig in the North Sea both symbolise the high price which must be paid for oil. Oil is a dangerous commodity; dangerous for the tanker crews who risk being strafed by Iranian gun-boats in the Strait of Hormuz; for the members of the US task force, who try to keep these shipping lanes open; and for those who work on

oil rigs miles offshore in the North Sea.

The grief caused by the deaths of over 450 people is not the only consequence of these disasters. Relations between Iran and America have come under even greater strain, endangering the lives of British and US hostages held in Beirut and bringing the threat of Islamic terrorist retribution. At home, the closing down

of Piper Alpha and five adjacent rigs could cost Britain as much as £500 million. This can only add to the burden of an economy which, according to City analysts, faces a £10 billion balance-of-payments deficit.

Meanwhile, in response to the Butler-Sloss report on child abuse in Cleveland, the British Government propose to establish a new Office of Child Protection.

Other new legislation promised includes further restrictions on the disclosure of state secrets.

But while Britain planned to tighten her security laws, Russia made significant steps towards even greater openness. The 19th Soviet Communist Party Conference encouraged frank debate and decided to reorganise the country's governing bodies in a way which could relax the Party's grip.

## FRIDAY, JUNE 10

● Michael Meacher, the Labour MP, who sued *The Observer* newspaper after it claimed that he was a "louse" who had lied about his middle-class background to gain ground in the Labour party, lost his libel case and faced costs of £200,000.

● Cyril Smith, the Liberal MP, and William Golding, the novelist, were knighted in the Queen's Birthday Honours list. Sir William Rees-Mogg was made a life peer.

● The Government announced that it was looking at a plan for six new television channels in the 1990s, which could result in viewers needing a satellite dish to pick up BBC2 and Channel 4 transmissions.

## SATURDAY, JUNE 11

● Over 100 musicians, including Sting, Stevie Wonder and Simple Minds, performed in a concert at Wembley Stadium before a crowd of 72,000 people, to celebrate the 70th birthday of Nelson Mandela and to raise money for the British Anti-Apartheid Movement and other African causes.

## SUNDAY, JUNE 12

● English soccer fans rampaged through Stuttgart, after Ireland beat England 1-0 in the European Championship. There were further clashes in Düsseldorf when England was knocked out of the cup after a 3-1 defeat by the Netherlands. On June 19, the England supporters rioted in Frankfurt. Afterwards, British ministers proposed a number of plans to restrain hooligans, including an increase in drink prices, compulsory identity cards for football supporters and the confiscation of convicted hooligans' passports.

● A Jaguar driven by Johnny Dumfries, Jan Lammers of Holland, and Andy Wallace, became the first British car in 31 years to win the Le Mans 24-hour race.



Iranians mourn the loss of the 290 civilian airbus passengers mistakenly shot down in the Gulf



Airbus A320 crashed near the Swiss-French border

## MONDAY, JUNE 13

● Patrick McVeigh, a suspected IRA terrorist, escaped extradition from Ireland to England, when District Justice Jarlath Ruane released him because there were no British police present in court to identify him.

## TUESDAY, JUNE 14

● Denzil Davies resigned as

Labour party defence spokesman, claiming, "I am fed up with being humiliated by Neil Kinnock". His departure follows Kinnock's earlier decision to renounce unilateral disarmament.

● The Government announced that farmers would be paid up to £80 an acre not to grow food as part of a plan to shrink the

Common Market grain mountain.

## WEDNESDAY, JUNE 15

● Six soldiers were killed and nine civilians injured when an IRA bomb blew up an unmarked army van after a charity fun run in Lisburn, Co Antrim. Mrs Thatcher called the incident a "terrible atrocity" but said she would be "very reluctant" to reintroduce internment.

● Peter Clowes was arrested in connection with the Barlow Clowes scandal where investors lost savings of almost £190 million.

## THURSDAY, JUNE 16

● A Nairobi factory-worker was jailed for three months in Kenya for "very unsocial behaviour" after he refused to give a lift to a hitchhiking commissioner.

● Ismael Sowan, an Arab double agent who spied for Israel, was jailed for 11 years for storing an arsenal of guns and explosives in his bathroom in Hull. Afterwards, the Government expelled an Israeli





The world's worst oilfield disaster: the Piper Alpha oil platform which ignited claiming 166 lives, experts have yet to discover why

diplomat and PLO official from Britain because of its anger over Mossad's failure to pass on vital information.

## MONDAY, JUNE 20

- The body of Marie Wilks, 22, the pregnant woman who disappeared after her car broke down on a motorway, was found near the M50 in Worcestershire, two days after she vanished.

- Police arrested 20 people for obstruction at Wimbledon, as part

of a clampdown on ticket touts. Theresa Gorman, Conservative MP for Billericay, said that touts were a blessing because they obtained tickets for people who value them most.

- Patrick McLaughlin and Liam McCotter, IRA members who had planned a prolonged campaign of violence in Britain with enough explosives to make 25 bombs, were given jail sentences totalling 37 years.

**“My nose may  
run like the Nile . . .  
but I shall be  
there on Sunday.”**

*Grace Bumbry, before the première of the Earl's Court production of Aida; on the conflict of Verdi and hay fever, June 26*

## TUESDAY, JUNE 21

- The West Indies cricket team beat England by 134 runs in the Second Test at Lords.

- The European court of justice in Luxembourg ruled that Britain was breaking EEC regulations by exempting the construction industry and other businesses from Value Added Tax. Britain's financial sector, charities, private schools and hospitals now face an extra tax bill of more than £160



# The Month

million a year.

● Five thousand hippies and 1,300 police were involved in running battles at summer solstice ceremonies around Stonehenge.

## WEDNESDAY, JUNE 22

● Interest rates rose by 0.5 per cent to 9 per cent amid growing Government fears that the strength of the economy will boost inflation, leading to higher wage demands. On June 27, the balance of payments deficit reached an all-time high of £1.2 billion while the pound fell more than two cents against the dollar.

● Sir John Hermon, Chief Constable of the Royal Ulster Constabulary, announced that he will retire next year.

● Douglas Hurd, the Home Secretary, suggested that the television licence should be scrapped in favour of pay-as-you-view or subscription television.

## THURSDAY, JUNE 23

● Rowntree, the beleaguered York-based confectioner, finally accepted a £2.5 billion bid from Nestlé, the Swiss foods group, after a hard-fought takeover battle.

● An army Lynx helicopter made a forced landing in South Armagh after being hit by terrorist gunfire. The IRA are now suspected of possessing heavy-calibre machine-guns and SAM missiles, supplied by Libya, capable of bringing down aircraft.

## FRIDAY, JUNE 24

● Roger Henderson QC concluded the King's Cross Tube disaster inquiry by blaming senior management. He denied that the disaster was "unforeseeable" and listed 40 shortcomings which had contributed to the deaths of 31 people in the fire last November.

● The severe dustbowl drought in America was blamed by NASA scientist, Dr James Hansen, on the "greenhouse effect", caused by pollution.

● Darren Fowler, aged 16, was ordered to be detained for life after injuring teachers and pupils at his school with seven blasts of a shotgun. He was said to be an "unstable and dangerous" teenager and had a strong interest in the Hungerford massacre.

## SATURDAY, JUNE 25

● The Lord Butler-Sloss inquiry into the Cleveland child sex-abuse scandal concluded that most of the blame lay in inadequate co-operation between doctors, social workers and police. The inquiry criticised Dr Marietta Higgs and Dr Geoffrey Wyatt for relying solely on the controversial reflex anal dilation (RAD) method to assess whether or not children had been abused.

## SUNDAY, JUNE 26

● Three people died and 133 were injured when an Airbus A320 aircraft crashed near the Swiss-French border, while flying low over trees during a demonstration flight. On June 27, investigators blamed the pilot for flying too low.

## TUESDAY, JUNE 28

● Mikhail Gorbachev opened the 19th Soviet national Communist party conference with a three-and-a-half-hour speech in which he appealed for sweeping economic, social and political reforms and proposed that a new parliamentary body should replace the Supreme Soviet. On July 1, the conference ended and Gorbachev declared triumphantly, "We have made *perestroika* irreversible."

● Monet's painting *Dans la prairie* was sold at Sotheby's for £14.3 million, a record price for an Impressionist painting at auction.

● A 14-year-old girl was seriously injured when an IRA bomb blew



**Black sheep:** Cardinal Lefebvre, who led his flock away from Rome

up a bus carrying 12 Roman Catholic and Protestant schoolchildren in Lisnaskea, Co Fermanagh.

● Chancellor of the Exchequer, Nigel Lawson, denied claims by City analysts that Britain could be as much as £12 billion in the red this year and called them "teenage scribblers".

## WEDNESDAY, JUNE 29

● Cannon UK announced that they had sold Elstree Studios, Britain's first major film production centre, where stars including Lord Olivier and Sir Ralph Richardson made their screen debuts.

● The Government proposed plans to close loopholes in the Official Secrets Act, preventing any "public interest" disclosures and imposing "an inescapable duty of secrecy" on members and former members of the security services.



**Bulldog Breed?** A British football supporter, caged in Germany



**Rocking against apartheid** at the Nelson Mandela concert

● Sir John Hermon, head of the Royal Ulster Constabulary, and two senior officers were cleared of any disciplinary offences over allegations of a "shoot to kill" policy. On July 4, it was announced that 20 other officers could be charged.

## THURSDAY, JUNE 30

● Over 4,500 British racing pigeons failed to return home after

being distracted by electromagnetic disturbances caused by a large solar flare.

● Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre provoked the first schism for 118 years in the Roman Catholic Church when he consecrated four bishops without papal approval, after claiming "the posts of authority in Rome have been occupied by antichrists".



## The Month

### FRIDAY, JULY 1

● Shareholders in the Savoy Hotel rejected a takeover bid launched by Rocco Forte and Trusthouse Forte.

### SATURDAY, JULY 2

● Steffi Graf, the 19-year-old West German, beat Martina Navratilova 5-7 6-2 6-1 to win the women's lawn tennis championship at Wimbledon.

● Five British holidaymakers were remanded in custody in

● The General Synod of the Church of England approved in principle, with a 58 per cent vote, legislation for the ordination of women as priests.

### WEDNESDAY, JULY 6

● The North Sea oil platform, Piper Alpha, 120 miles north-east of Aberdeen, exploded and burnt down to the waterline, killing 166

**“Our shiny  
new toys have let us  
down again.”**

*New Yorker speaking on a radio phone-in about the Iranian air disaster, July 4*

people. The explosion was apparently caused by a gas leak. Armand Hammer, Chairman of Occidental Petroleum, denied having been warned that his company's rig was “the most dangerous in the North Sea”. Red Adair, the well-known oil troubleshooter, was called in to tackle the fire.

● The Government announced plans to force football fans to carry club membership identification cards.

● Two London buskers who sued British Transport Police for falsely imprisoning them for half an hour after throwing them off a Tube train, were awarded 20p damages.

### THURSDAY, JULY 7

● An IRA bomb intended for an army foot patrol exploded in a Belfast swimming pool, killing two civilians. John Howard, a bomb disposal expert, died when a second booby trapped bomb exploded. He was the 400th regular soldier to be killed in Northern Ireland.

### FRIDAY, JULY 8

● Britain signed a £10 billion arms agreement with Saudi Arabia.

● Jimmy Edwards, the comedian who played the disreputable headmaster in *Whacko!*, died aged 68.

### SATURDAY, JULY 9

Barbara Woodhouse, the animal trainer, famous for her ringing catchword, “Walkies!”, died aged 78.

### SUNDAY, JULY 10

● Ayrton Senna of Brazil won the British Grand Prix at Silverstone. Briton Nigel Mansell took second place.

● A poster showing a heroin addict, designed to warn people of the dangers of drug abuse, was criticised after it was discovered that some girls were using the poster as a pin-up.



**Stefan Edberg, the Wimbledon men's singles champion**

Majorca after a brawl in which a taxi driver died of a heart attack.

### SUNDAY, JULY 3

● The US cruiser, *Vincennes*, shot down an Iranian A300 Airbus in the Gulf, killing all 290 aboard. The Americans claimed to have confused the 177 ft aircraft on their radar screens for a 62 ft F-14 Tomcat. Mohammed Mahallati, Iran's Ambassador at the United Nations, condemned the incident as “a premeditated act of terrorism”.

### MONDAY, JULY 4

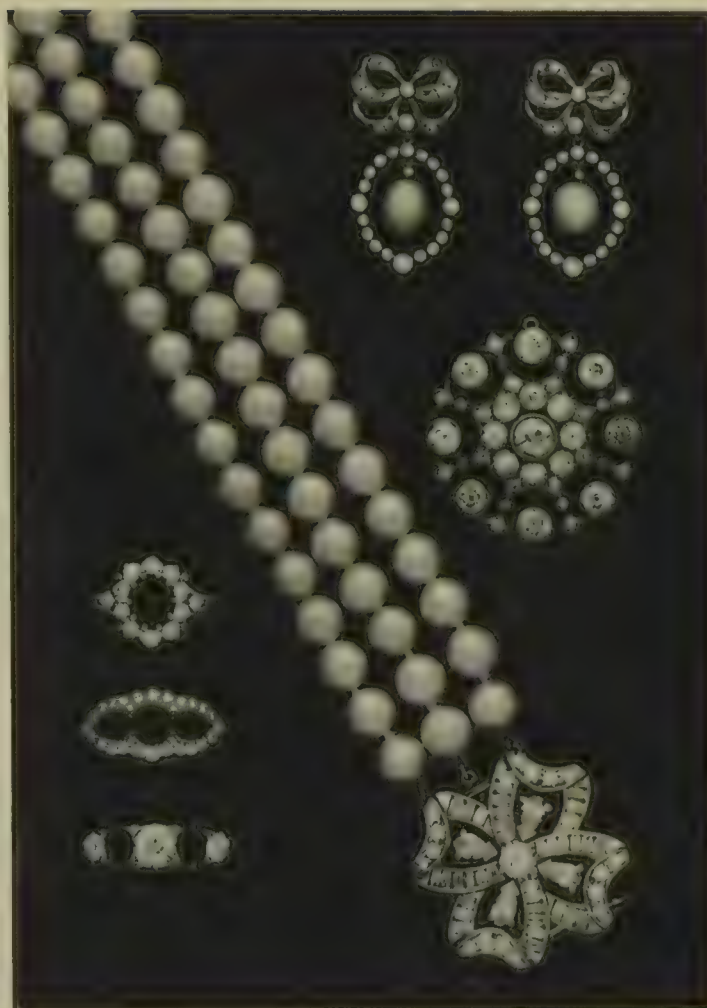
● Stefan Edberg, the 22-year-old Swede, beat the 20-year-old West German, Boris Becker to win the men's singles lawn tennis finals at Wimbledon.

● The British Government insisted that the SAS soldiers who shot dead three IRA terrorists in Gibraltar would give evidence to an inquest only if their identities were protected.

● Dawn Blighton, a 19-year-old secretary, was conditionally discharged after trying to poison a stockbroker's clerk with Tippex thinning fluid when she overheard him gossiping about her.

### TUESDAY, JULY 5

● The West Indies cricket team beat England by an innings and 156 runs in the third Test at Old Trafford.



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## The iron is her favourite club

Margaret Thatcher has no aptitude for holiday-making. When she is persuaded to take in a Swiss mountain or go near a golf course in Cornwall, much of her time is spent reviewing the performance of her ministers in preparation for the autumn cabinet reshuffle. With all the rigorous attention to detail displayed by the nation's deputy headmistresses, she pores over the names, assessing each one for presentation, dedication, achievement, potential and, above all, loyalty.

This year the activity is most likely to be directed at the posts of Foreign Secretary and Chancellor of the Exchequer. Sir Geoffrey Howe occupies the former, but for how long? There have been signs that he has incurred her displeasure, especially over the row about interest rates in which he took Chancellor Lawson's side.

It may be that Sir Geoffrey, who has taken many cabinet dressings-down, has been undermined by the presence of Charles Powell in Number 10. He came from the Foreign Office as a special adviser and has acquired considerable power in the making of British foreign policy. His advice is often preferred to Sir Geoffrey's.

Until June, Lawson was generally considered to be unassailable. He has presided over enormous growth (although fuelled by large consumer credit) and presented well-judged budgets. But recent trade figures have damaged his position, and the Prime Minister may feel she can do without him.

So who is in line for promotion? It seems almost certain that Cecil Parkinson, recently promoted to head of Star Chamber (a committee which sorts out disputes between departments and the Treasury) will get one of the important jobs. Before his downfall he was going for the Foreign Office

and that now seems the most likely destination. Sir Geoffrey, a faithful servant since 1970, would get a viscounty and deportation order.

Alternatively, Sir Geoffrey could be replaced by Nigel Lawson, who would in turn be replaced by Cecil Parkinson. This neat manoeuvre would be impossible if Lawson were to take a job outside the Government in the City, which he is rumoured to be considering.

Another included in her calculations is John Moore. Although he has performed lamentably, he may be saved by the plan to split the Social Security and Health operations of his department. He would take one, while Anthony Newton, whose high competence and flashes of debating flair have won friends, is likely to be given the other. Nick Scott, too, may be deemed worthy of a promotion in Health and Social Security.

Certain to get the chop is Paul Channon, who is thought to be weak and too much under the domineering personality of Lord King, head of British Airways. Lower down the scale there is Peter Bottomley, whose humour is often mistaken for flippancy, and Edwina Currie, who talks too much. Both, however, have performed reasonably but have been guilty of making too many jokes.

## The man in the pinko tie

*The Sunday Telegraph, that most traditional and conservative of all newspapers, appears to be changing its allegiance. On September 9 it launches a new section of the paper to be called Seven Days.*

*This is, of course, the title of a long-established communist magazine. Doubtless we shall soon see the Sunday Telegraph's editor, Peregrine Worsthorne, forsake the Garrick Club to join unilateral disarmament marches and rallies against Clause 28.*

## After the murder, the book goes to court

Notwithstanding contenders for this year's Booker Prize, the most discussed book of the autumn is *The Suzy Lamplugh Story*, an account of the young estate agent who was abducted exactly two years ago while showing a client around a property in London. The tabloid newspapers have got wind of salacious details in Suzy's lifestyle and the publisher, Faber & Faber, are understood to have rejected an offer of £250,000 from the *News of the World* for serialisation rights. These have gone to the *Observer*, which will print an extract around October 24, the publication date.

It may be thought that Faber & Faber and their author, Andrew Stephen, would welcome the interest the book has aroused. In fact, recent weeks have been spent negotiating with lawyers hired by Suzy's mother, Diana Lamplugh, who has been greatly distressed by Stephen's researches into the character of her daughter.

There is a feeling, extending beyond the Lamplugh family, that the book could damage the work of the Suzy Lamplugh Trust, which Diana set up to help single working women in London. Matthew Evans, the managing director of

Faber & Faber, maintains that Stephen has been very responsible. "He has left out some incredibly difficult stuff—material that would have been better suited to, let's say, the *News of the World* than Faber & Faber."

## Media breakfasts influencing the future of TV

The author William Shawcross, whose *Sideshow* exposed the covert history of the Vietnam war,



Shawcross: Murdoch's biographer

has agreed to write the definitive history of Rupert Murdoch for Chatto & Windus.

Doubtless, therefore, he will be present at the Savoy Hotel on July 26 when Murdoch and his *Sunday Times* editor, Andrew Neil, hold a "media breakfast" debating "Broadcasting into the 90s". It will be a PR coup if these two appear as detached observers, for Murdoch's papers led the attack, started by Norman Tebbit, on the BBC, and they have recently been predicting ITV's collapse.

One might expect television professionals to decline the invitation. But no. Lining up alongside Murdoch and Neil in this early-morning bunfight will be the BBC's Director-General,



Suzy Lamplugh: libel?



Michael Checkland; Channel 4 chief, Michael Grade; Thames Television's managing director, Richard Dunn; and Sir William Rees-Mogg, chairman of the Broadcasting Standards Council.

These so-called "power breakfasts" are becoming the fashion in attempts to influence opinion on the future of British television. Sir Jeffrey Sterling has already been meeting media moguls over the marmalade at his P&O headquarters to help him draw up a special report on broadcasting for the Prime Minister.

## Losing the stars, feeling the stripes

*It transpires that health inspectors are among the ILN's most careful readers. Last August we reported in an article headed "The Million Bug Meals" that food at Le Gavroche, Albert Roux's extremely expensive restaurant, contained more bacteria than many fast-food outlets. A Westminster area health inspector read the article and returned to the restaurant a week after he had already found evidence of inadequate hygiene. Now Westminster City Council has issued 20 summonses against Le Gavroche, and it is being questioned whether the restaurant will retain the three stars it was awarded by the Michelin Guide. The resulting ignominy would leave only one three-star restaurant in Britain: the Waterside Inn at Bray in Berkshire, owned by Albert's brother, Michel. Small consolation, one imagines.*



Albert Roux: three-star bacteria

## Anyone for frame throwing?

Why is it that other people's conversations in restaurants are so much more interesting than one's own? Even the most mun-

dane dispute between husband and wife, or a dry discussion between businessmen, can make compulsive listening. Take lunchtime the other day in Wilson's restaurant, Shepherd's Bush. A slight young man entered for a late lunch with four businessmen, all at least 15 years his senior. What was immediately interesting about this group was the attentiveness with which the grey heads listened to the young man. He talked about design, new materials, new lines, new gadgets, marketing devices and, above all, his father, who it turned out was Terence Conran. This was Sebastian, who was impressive except when he uttered the following: "Yes, the disabled market is very interesting. We are looking at ways of changing its image. There is no reason why the walking-sticks and walking-frames should not be marketed in a different way. They could have a sporty connotation."

## Seriously interfacing with bubbly

Contributions to Serpentine's Cliché Watch have poured in "fast and furious". The watchful purists in the ILN's readership have most frequently taken against the modern use of power as in "power breakfasting" and "power dressing". Again, this comes from America, where people are interested in "power display". At first it was used with a touch of irony in Britain but this disappeared as people seriously began to "power breakfast".

"Serious", as in *Serious Money*, "seriously intelligent" and "seriously attractive", have been around for a while but are now gaining currency. These expressions came from deb-speak. This brings us to the "speak" attachment, which we believe was devised by George Orwell. Aside from "newspeak", we have "Thatcherspeak", "makespeak" and "artspeak". They refer to idioms which are believed to mask untruths.

Now for the bottles of champagne. The Reverend Clifford Warren has named "raincheck", which comes from American weathermenspeak. He also encourages people to drop that awful expression "at the rock face", which is designed to evoke images of people working with their shirts off and battling against insuperable odds. In other words,

at the "sharp end". Another bottle goes to Patrick Campbell who spotted a cliché in our Editor's Letter last month. While hewing at the rock face of journalism, he wrote about people "sipping" champagne. Mr Campbell points out that nobody is ever reported in the media as "drinking" champagne. He assures Serpentine that he will drink his bottle.

## The clamp fails the driving test

*It seems the clamping convoys that cruise our London streets are becoming increasingly frenzied in their fettering of anything remotely*



Clamped: a test of patience

vehicular. An ILN employee, who had failed her first driving test after attempting to break into a car she thought was hers, anxiously waited at Hammersmith Broadway for her instructor to whisk her to Greenford for a second try. Fifty minutes later, her confidence in shreds, a telephone call to head office revealed that the instructor was hopping up and down in a distant street, his car firmly clamped.

After a two-minute stop at a pupil's home in Queensway, he had found a clamping-a-clamping and nothing would induce to stop. It was indeed "hard luck, mate", not only for an instructor trying to earn a living and a helpless pupil stranded at a roadside, but for an examiner whose costly time was being spent hanging about a test centre in far-off Greenford.

## A better class of drinker

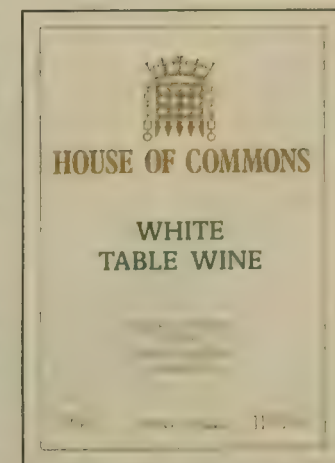
The current fuss over the drinking habits of the Great British Hooligan ignores the less than abstemious behaviour of

many of our MPs. Alcohol is the essential lubricant of political life, they claim, for what other job is there which demands so much time to be killed, bores to be anaesthetised and good fellowship to be displayed?

This is their justification for the innumerable bars to be found in the Palace of Westminster. Wander off course, take the wrong turning, or climb an unknown staircase, and there is always an undiscovered bar behind which stands a motherly soul who has seen and heard everything. The licensing laws, of course, do not apply here. The motto is "We Never Close".

The Press Lobby takes refuge in Annie's bar, where MPs drop in for a gin and a friendly shoulder. Labour MPs patronise the Strangers' Bar, which has access on to the terrace. Known as "the Kremlin", the Strangers' makes room for guests who come to rub shoulders and sponge drinks. It is respectable, but certainly not genteel and, as the House staggers on into the watches of the night, a place of comfort and consolation. Its regulars include Denis Healey, Michael Foot, Eric Heffer and, somewhat surprisingly, the Tory Cabinet Minister Kenneth Clarke, who has no difficulty in becoming "one of the lads".

The holy of holies is the Smoking Room. It has the appearance of White's and the company to be



Anyone for a bottle party?

found at the Carlton. Large, oaky, plush and comfortable, it is the haunt of the better sort of Tory MP, the kind with four buttons on his cuffs. It serves as an assembly-point before lunch and dinner, when ambitious MPs can buy the Chief Whip a drink in the hope of being invited to join the great man on the Chief Whip's table. There is gin before eating and brandy ➤➤➤



after. Although no one has ever said as much, there is an unwritten code of behaviour. Only Labour MPs remove their jackets, however hot it may become. Nobody brings in an overcoat. Books are never read, although newspapers are permitted.

If MPs need to impress their visitors, there is the Pugin Room, which is to be found in the frontier zone between Lords and Commons. If in doubt, look at the

carpet: if it is red, you are in the Lords, if green and threadbare, then you are still in the Commons.

Alcohol and adultery are the two hazards of life at Westminster. The Lords win the cup for adultery. The Commons may drink to pass the time, but its members have yet to attack old ladies. Moreover, alcohol late at night is believed to improve the quality of ministers' speeches. The

Members' Dining Room, in fact, once boasted a wine cellar which had been built up over the years by Tory knights of the shires. In the 60s Robert Maxwell, then an MP, was made the chairman of the Kitchen Committee in order to give him something to do (and keep him quiet). His Committee promptly sold off the wine to Grant's of St James's who now provide the Commons with a short, if well-patronised, list.

Robert Maxwell can take what comfort he can from the fact that his name is never far from MPs' lips.

No MP, of course, may ever be accused of excessive imbibing. There is an ancient law about bringing the House of Commons into disrepute. The alleged offender can be called to account at the bar of the House of Commons, and then interned in the Tower of London. No MP is a hypocrite, either.

## A dreadful day out PUERTO BANUS, SPAIN

There is intelligent life in Puerto Banús, but it is not human. In this reputedly chic little marina-town, just west of Marbella on Spain's Costa del Sol, it is the fish that have all the class. Every evening restaurants along the waterfront display the day's catch, lovingly laying out the lords of the Mediterranean on beds of ice. A pair of ruddy monsters with fleshy whiskers and cavernous mouths stare frostily at their prospective consumers. There are red mullet, sardines and shrimps, all barely dead, and there are lobsters, alive and still crawling. These are the grandees of Puerto Banús, its elders, and they gaze at the passing crowds with glassy contempt.

It is easy to see why. The people here may be rolling in many things, but genteel refinement is not one of them. With all the charm of an Alton Towers in the sun, Puerto Banús is a haven for those who equate flashiness with sophistication, a showground for the conspicuously loaded and the conspicuously unlovely. At the same time it is lively, brash and diverting and, for those so inclined, worth a visit—albeit a fleeting one.

Built around the marina, which is its heart, the town has been growing steadily over the years. Though still small, it now boasts its own bull-ring, a Barclays bank, and two futuristic apartment blocks with coppery domes and an abundance of tinted glass. Their architect—like the men who built St Basil's cathedral in Moscow—should have been blinded once his work was done, though not for quite the same reasons.

Boats, not buildings, are the important thing in Puerto Banús, however. They are its *raison d'être*, and while some of the craft crowding its marina are fairly modest—such as you might see at Chichester or Cowes—others are decidedly Big League affairs. There are a few sleek, low-lying sailing boats with brass fittings and polished decks, but more common—in both senses of the word—are the massive powerboats. These are the Barratt homes of the sea: solid, unimaginative and crammed with those comforts so essential to gracious living. Jacuzzis, gold taps and fully-fitted galleys must be among the standard fixtures, and it would come as no surprise to find half-timbered cabins and leaded portholes. Designed to cover thousands of nautical miles, these lethargic brutes rarely move, but languish at their moorings like hippos in a waterhole.

When yacht-watching begins to pall, it is time to sit at one of the many waterside cafés and enjoy the parade. Despite the temptations of the Sinatra Bar—an establishment which the man himself seems unlikely to patronise—the Salduba Pub, on the corner of the principal street, the Muelle Ribera, is the perfect place to do a little anthropological field



work. Coffees are expensive—at 200 pesetas each (about £1) they cost twice as much as anywhere else—but here you are paying for the view, the red-hot action and the distinguished company.

Bert sat at the next table. Wizen and worried-looking, he was surrounded by young women aspiring to be Joan Collins. One girl sported elaborately studded denim, another a Dallas-style suit with a nipped-in waist and huge shoulders. Trace ordered maitais all round. The conversation turned to the weather.

Behind, a man with a beer and a timid wife talked about turbos and Spanish driving. In

front, people wandered along the waterfront. Young men hung out of cars to assess the available "talent"—and there appeared to be plenty on offer. A ruched, green mini-dress with a well-rounded body inside sauntered by, its wearer displaying no visible knicker line. The young men hung farther out of their cars. Trace's maitais turned up, pale pink and umbrella'd. More people poured on to the waterfront.

Most of them were English, with pockets of Germans and Americans here and there. The only Spaniards not obviously waiters were a woman and her little boy. Earlier in the evening, before the crowds arrived, they had been leaning precariously over the edge of the harbour and throwing down handfuls of stale bread. Dozens of large black fish had risen to this unlikely bait, pellucid rainbows breaking over their backs wherever they had cut the surface of the oily water.

Some of those fish would probably end up in paellas: Puerto Banús is bulging with restaurants, and the demand for seafood must be enormous. Don Leone is the town's best-known restaurant, but Silk's, at the easternmost end of the Muelle Ribera, overlooking the rather dingy little beach, is more enjoyable. The photographs of celebrated patrons displayed outside are a feast in themselves. Here, smiling with the proprietor, were Russ Abbott, Kevin Keegan, Rod Stewart and the bulkier half of Little & Large. With the important exception of "Tarby"—who prefers, perhaps, to stay at home and use his microwave—the owner of Silk's appears to have entertained the entire cast of *Live From the Palladium*. This seems a little unfair, because they rarely entertain anybody.

Predictably, the guidebooks are full of nonsense about Puerto Banús. They suggest it is a jet-setters' paradise: trendy, exciting and chic. In reality, none of these adjectives applies, and the town is alarmingly similar to Torremolinos. Only money and a stretch of coastline divide the two. And neither of these things has preserved Puerto Banús from galloping vulgarity ●

LORA SAVINO



# & ampersand

Alan Rusbridger  
picks up a real  
bestseller,  
salutes the  
gutter press and  
creates a stink

**H**ave you read the new Rosamunde Pilcher yet? You haven't? My dear, what have you been reading? Actually, the chances are that very few *ILN* readers have yet managed to get to grips with *The Shell Seekers*, just published by Hodder & Stoughton, nor ever will. I myself heard about it only because Mrs Pilcher, a 63-year-old grandmother living near Dundee, was a friend of my late mother-in-law. But it is pretty safe to predict that Mrs Pilcher's book will be one of the runaway successes of 1988.

Not that you will ever read a review of *The Shell Seekers* or hear it discussed on *Critics' Forum*. It is one of the books read by the container-load yet completely unknown to the chattering classes. It is about the only thing which satisfactorily explains the publishing industry to me.

We all know of people—who have read of many more—who receive hefty advances for books that will never, in a hundred years, sell more than a couple of thousand copies. Salman Rushdie doubtless sells more than that—but does he really shift enough to cover the Hollywood-style fees he reputedly commands nowadays? At the other end of the genteel market are publishers still faithfully losing money on first novels that will also never be reviewed and which, now the public library system is crumbling on its feet, will never sell more than 600 copies.

Enter Mrs Pilcher's editor at Hodder & Stoughton. "What I want," he tells her, handing over a £150,000 advance, "is a great big fat book for women."

Five hundred pages later the book hit the *New York Times* best-seller list within a fortnight of being published and stayed there for three months. Saatchi



& Saatchi have been masterminding the £30,000 marketing effort in this country.

There is little sex in the book ("I couldn't do that if you put a gun to my head... you could give it your granny to read"). It is competing this summer with rather steamier blockbusters—Celia Brayfield and Shirley Conran among them—with blockbuster promotion behind them too.

But the market can evidently take it, though it works in a mysterious way. "I'm always amazed when I read the annual list of best-selling paperbacks," one Islington bookseller told me. "It's not that I haven't sold one copy of any of the top 20 myself. It's that I've never even heard of them." He supposes most of the books are sold through supermarkets and Woolworth's.

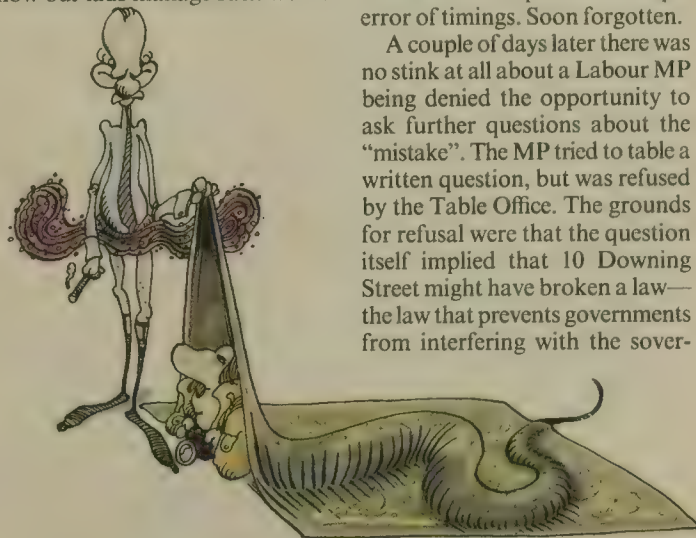
So there is Mrs Pilcher—wife of a retired Dundee jute merchant, dog-lover, grandmother and mother of four—sitting in her Tayside home subsidising all the names you see on the literary pages and hear on *Kaleidoscope*. Cross-fertilisation, they probably call it. At least, I suppose that is what explains it all.

**O**ur lads are whipped in Frankfurt, laughed out of court at Wimbledon and hammered out of the ground at Lord's. But let us not succumb to the British disease of defeatism. There are still one or two things we do better than anyone else. We can still turn out a better class of hooligan, for one thing. And we can still beat the world at a stake-out.

Look at the Yanks, if you want proof. You will recall the pathetic apology for a stake-out that the *Miami Herald* mounted on Senator Gary Hart a year or so back. It began with one reporter—one reporter!—on the corner of Mr Hart's street one Friday evening. He panics when he sees Miss Bimbo enter Mr Hart's

house and summons help from an off-duty colleague who happens to be passing. They eventually summon two more reporters and a photographer. But even with four reporters and a photographer they still botch it. The boys find it wearisome work. For five hours in the middle of the night—five hours!—there is no one outside the house at all. Even when they are there the time is spent driving round the block every 10 minutes or so. There is no picture of Gary and Miss B together and when the story hits the streets the boys admit they were not watching the house that closely.

A very amateurish affair, you will agree. The national bosom swells with pride at the thought of how our lads manage such work.



Look at the Frank Bough job, for instance. Our boys from the *News of the World* spent 10 months tracking the evidence down. Ten months! Look at Major Ron Ferguson. Months of sitting around in hot and stuffy vans photographing everyone who went in and out of the Wigmore Club. Look at John Golding. Evidence so watertight the guy is thrown out of his job. Captain Mark Phillips—round-the-clock surveillance. What about the late Russell Harty or Mr

Harvey Proctor? Our boys go wired for sound. The very latest technology. No stone unturned. No expense spared. The British tit'n'bum agent gets his man.

It is hard and thankless work. Weeks spent hanging around with rent boys and prostitutes, working out how best to launder the large sums of money being invested in the cause. I sometimes think these chaps do not get the credit due to them. Pretty soon anyone hoping to indulge in a spot of extra-marital hanky-panky will know they are safe only when doing it abroad, where the Fourth Estate is less professional. And Britain will be a cleaner place.

**I**t is strange, the things in public life that pass by almost entirely unnoticed. Back in May there was the most almighty stink about a television company having the temerity to make a film about the killing of three IRA operatives in Gibraltar. Soon forgotten. A little later there was a much smaller stink about a 10 Downing Street announcement that the Gibraltar coroner intended to delay the inquest into the killings, not wishing it to coincide with, or detract in any way from, the world-famous Gibraltar Festival. Some raised an eyebrow and thought it rather odd that 10 Downing Street should have made the announcement before the Gibraltar coroner. A mistake, Number 10 explained. Simple error of timings. Soon forgotten.

A couple of days later there was no stink at all about a Labour MP being denied the opportunity to ask further questions about the "mistake". The MP tried to table a written question, but was refused by the Table Office. The grounds for refusal were that the question itself implied that 10 Downing Street might have broken a law—the law that prevents governments from interfering with the sover-

eignty of the Gibraltar coroner. In Britain MPs are not allowed to ask questions that imply that someone high-up might have broken a law. Of course, some might argue that you don't know if someone has broken a law until you have had a chance to ask questions about it. But there again I have not seen anyone arguing that in this context. It was just a little one-paragraph snippet of news in one or two papers. Here today, gone tomorrow ●







# Anna, the other Murdoch

With her second novel, *Family Business*, about to be released in Britain and already a success in the States, Anna Murdoch, once a lowly reporter on the Sydney *Daily Mirror* and now the wife of a press baron, lives life in the fast lane.

CYNTHIA COTTS met her in New York

**T**he sitting room is appointed with Chippendale, chintz and a black baby grand piano. Outside, slate terraces overlook the treetops and the reservoir in Central Park. On the coffee table, a magazine cover story on Robert Maxwell is headlined: "The Man who would be Murdoch".

Anna Murdoch glides up from a lower floor of the triplex apartment. "Rupert is at home sick today, having things faxed to him. But nothing was coming through. We finally realized that the switch was on automatic instead of manual."

Her second novel, *Family Business*, which came out in the United States in February, will be released in Britain by William Collins next month. (Her husband owns a controlling interest in Collins.) *Family Business*, a 592-page saga, covers three generations of a newspaper-owning family and a century of print technology. The heroine is Yarrow McLean, a feminine version of the author's husband. Yarrow inherits a newspaper in Platte City, Colorado, from her father, and expands to create an empire with companies in London, New York and Denver. Despite the obvious source of her inspiration Anna insists that *Family Business* is not a *roman-à-clef*. "I didn't want to write one of those. It would be too easy. And besides, Rupert or I might write an autobiography one day."

Rupert is, of course, the Australian-born media baron who long ago owned a bust of Lenin and not long ago supported Ronald Reagan for a third term in office. After acquiring newspapers from Sydney and London to Chicago and New York, he purchased half of 20th-Century Fox in 1985 and became an American citizen so that he could buy his US broadcasting interests.

A year later he slipped \$1.6 billion into John Kluge's hands for six Metromedia TV stations, leaving his parent company, News Corporation, in debt. In 1987 he launched the Fox Television Network and last March sold his jewel in the crown, the *New York Post*. Mrs Murdoch is wistful about losing the *Post*. "I miss it. It's the first time we've lived in a city in

which we don't own a newspaper. It's very peculiar."

Anna is a tall, handsome blonde with opal eyes and a convincing precision of speech. There are certain questions, though, which she won't answer. Such as, does her husband want to influence the outcome of this year's presidential election? "I don't know."

Editorial influence, she says, comes through hiring. "Although you don't have hands-on, you hope that the choice of people you make and their independence in judging the news will at least not upset you every time you stand there and watch, particularly if you're losing money in the company!"

When *Forbes* magazine estimated Murdoch's personal worth at \$300 million in 1985, he discounted the figure, saying: "Their calculations seemed to include every member of my family, including distant relatives." Today Anna chimes in: "We're not as wealthy as people think."

Confronted with the image of Rupert as a profiteer who lowers standards to increase cir-

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"It's the first time  
we've lived in a city in  
which we don't  
own a newspaper"

---

ulation, Anna's response is a stock one: why focus on a few papers when the holding company is so diverse? As for sensationalism, that charge "has been picked up by people with other axes to grind as an overall slur on him which isn't accurate."

Her morality and conventionality are well known, so I wondered how she reacts to writing about sex? "If it fits into the story and you can handle it lyrically or romantically, then it can be done well. I had a friend who advised me about sex scenes. He said, 'I just never write them.'

Well, he hasn't sold many books." There is sex in *Family Business*. "I'm writing about a woman who lived for 60-odd years, I mean she *had* to have sex." At her most raucous, Mrs Murdoch turns a sexual act into a fairy tale involving a centipede and a tree.

Anna Torv was 17 when she met Rupert. The daughter of Estonian immigrants, she was born in Scotland in 1944 and moved to Australia nine years later. At convent school she felt over-protected, and dreamed of a life as an artist.

"Writing and acting are similar in that you're able to indulge in a fantasy life. You can't do that much in other careers." She studied acting, but gave it up after the Sydney *Daily Mirror* hired her as a cadet reporter. "I mean, I had to eat." It cost less to write than to act.

Every year the cadets at the *Mirror* produced their own paper, and in 1961 Anna Torv was assigned to interview the publisher. "I had probably seen him around the office but, as you know yourself, a lowly cadet sees very little—you're lucky if you see the editor. You're usually being sent out by the finance editor to buy iced buns with extra butter on the side."

The 30-year-old Murdoch was at that time unhappily married to another woman. It seems that he and Anna were immediately drawn to each other and soon they were spotted at clubs together. When the publisher of the *Mirror* started *The Australian*, Anna was reassigned to Canberra. Their intimacy grew more apparent. "It was difficult for me to be working, even if I was in a different office from him, so I gave up. I loved the writing, but marriage was something girls did."

They married in 1967. In 1968, just after their daughter Elizabeth was born, they moved to London. Sons Lachlan and James followed, and their father's growing fame precipitated a kidnapping attempt. Security was stepped up. The family moved to New York in 1974.

By now James, the youngest, was school age. Seizing the moment while they were suspended on a ski-lift in Colorado, Anna told Rupert she had decided to get a degree. Though initially shaken, he realised that writing at home and doing her college courses were





Anna Murdoch with husband Rupert: "We're not as wealthy as people think."

compatible with her "duties as a mother".

At New York's Fordham University, professors reprimanded Anna for disrupting her studies with trips to London and Sydney. She decided to transfer when, seated next to the president of New York University at a social function, she was invited to join NYU's flexible, more urbane adult education division.

At NYU she took Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Literature and Mythology. Before starting a novel she wrote short stories but could not get them published. "I was told by an editor that my stories didn't fit into the formula that women's magazines were running. Perhaps that means I'm not a short-story writer unless I'm going into the small press. Perhaps I'm not a short-story writer at all."

She showed drafts of her first novel to Rupert, who complained that she could not write about men. A writing teacher coached her on point-of-view and dramatic structure. Through all the interruptions—Rupert needed a flat set up in England, her daughter took a dislike to school, the annual Christmas party was hell to arrange—Anna's good humour prevailed. Professionalism won the day.

**H**er first novel, *In Her Own Image*, came out in 1985. Set on a farm in Australia where one man ropes in two sisters' hearts, it attracted grudging critical welcome and reached second place on an Australian best-seller list.

*Family Business* will probably go higher, both for its old-fashioned storytelling and for the challenge of separating the real people from the fictional characters. "It's extraordinary what happens," says Anna. "You take a clue from people and they take on their own life."

Here, then, are some direct and indirect correspondences found in *Family Business*:

Yarrow McLean (media nob, mother of three, *überdame*) equals (in various parts)

Rupert Murdoch, Anna Murdoch and *Washington Post* chairman Katharine Graham.

Yarrow's *New York Telegraph* equals Rupert Murdoch's *New York Post*. Both offices are located on South Street in Manhattan, just below the Brooklyn Bridge.

Elliot Weyden (wealthy banker and *éminence grise*, liberal candidate, lover-boy) equals (in various parts) Nelson Rockefeller, Geraldine Ferraro and Rupert Murdoch.

Anna says that when she was writing *Family Business* "we were going through our problems at Wapping. It was a very satisfying book to write, because I thought I was explaining things to myself."

She also says that Barry Bingham's decision to sell his publishing empire in Louisville, Kentucky, happened while she was writing (the climax of *Family Business* draws heavily on that real-life drama). "When that story broke, I felt more comfortable about what I was doing. What is it—life imitates art?"

It is more likely she borrowed the Bingham scenario to explain why Yarrow would sell the *Telegraph*—some motive, that is, besides a Federal Communications Commission ruling. Anna herself would admit she made Yarrow a conservative and Elliot a liberal mainly to heighten the drama. "I wrote the end first, so I knew where I was going."

Aside from occasional moments, this is genre writing, make no mistake. It has stilted dialogue, unlikely coincidences, and the point-of-view shifts all down the page. Wacky cameos are pre-empted by stereotyped hippies and gays, gritty street scenes by a flat "on the Lower East Side with a view across the river to Queens".

At the worst, Mrs Murdoch has turned proselytiser, dramatising capitalist tenets with little irony. The rote recital of contract negotiations and the rapture over Elliot's business acumen expose a narrator who is doing

more explaining to herself than imagining.

Anna certainly shares her husband's views about management. If you hire someone to work in the house, and then realise it was a mistake, "it's best to come clean immediately and say, 'This isn't going to work. I'm awfully sorry,'" she says. If you're talking about public schools, it's the same question of management. "You can't have a strong leader and then tie his hands behind his back." And if there's a country to run, "I'm against government intervention. I want a government that lets us all get on with it."

**I**n the Murdochs' sitting room there is the sound of bird-song. An open door at the back leads into a small aviary with stone floor and skylight. A canary flies out of its cage, and Anna points out the nest where three chicks that hatched recently died. In the cage opposite, two love-birds bill, ignoring the nest Anna built for them. She wonders if they are the same sex.

The Murdoch boys are teenagers now, and Elizabeth is at college. She threw a party at her parents' place in May, and this summer she is taking a job as a waitress to pay for her car. Anna once flew three-quarters of the way around the world to meet her children for dinner. But she stays quiet on the subject. Is it to protect them or herself?

In *Family Business* Yarrow's children are under-achievers—by turns irresponsible, promiscuous and spoiled. Their low ambition-count is matched by a calcification of guilt inside Yarrow. *Only this morning Buck had complained about her lack of interest in him. He was playing on the football team at school and she had never made it to a game. As for Lily, when was the last time she had really talked with her daughter?* When asked why Yarrow is so often punished for her "selfishness", Anna is a bit surprised.

"I was only thinking of journalistic ways that you move the story on, but you're right. I hadn't realised—perhaps it's my guilt. I'm a very moral person. I'm very conscious of morality in that I don't like people to get away with things. Much as I love Yarrow and so on, she paid a price for loving this man and for wanting the business. A lot of us are seduced by the idea we can have everything, and it isn't so!"

The Murdochs lie low. Going out is kept to a minimum. Anna explains that "a certain shabbiness and a certain quietness are important to us." A devout Roman Catholic, she lends her presence to causes like the right-to-life campaign and the development of Catholic television programming.

Acquaintances praise Anna—you expect her to be pretentious, grand and unfeeling, but she's not. "Everyone who knows her seems to like her." Of her husband they say: "He's wonderful with the kids." And a gossip columnist who's downwind of every betrayal: "I've never heard of him fooling around." Another: "I like to think they're the one happy couple left in New York."

Legs tucked under her as she talks, husband a silent partner downstairs, Anna speaks in a throaty voice which plays counterpoint to the lilt of her birds. It is hard not to like her, even if it means liking the incarnation of morality, manners and money ●



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# GUN LAW IN BRITAIN

## HOW HARD IS IT TO BUY A GUN?

by Michael Black

**W**ednesday, August 19, 1987 was sunny and mild with a gentle breeze blowing that made it perfect picnic weather. At around midday Michael Ryan, aged 27, finished practising at a Wiltshire gun club and returned in his grey Vauxhall Astra to Hungerford where he lived with his mother. She had bought him the car earlier in the year. Ryan stopped on the way to fire 13 bullets from a Beretta pistol into a Mrs Godfrey, who was having a picnic with her two children in Savernake Forest. Shortly afterwards he stopped again at the Golden Arrow service station and fired at the cashier, who escaped unhurt.

Once he arrived home, Ryan shot his mother dead, as well as his next-door neighbours, the Masons. Then he set fire to his mother's house before going into Hungerford to continue his carnage. An hour later another 12 people were dead and 14 more injured. Eventually the police cornered him in a school and asked him to surrender. "It's funny how I can shoot other people, but I can't shoot myself," Ryan shouted back. Not long afterwards, he did.

Among his effects Ryan had a domestic arsenal of pistols, shotguns, semi-automatic rifles, and even a Second World War machine-gun. His Kalashnikov AK47, a gun used by many armies, was, like most of his weapons, properly licensed.

A year after Hungerford the ability of another Ryan to equip himself with the same arsenal is still relatively unimpaired. The Firearms Amendment Bill, due to become law this autumn, will outlaw semi-automatic weapons and introduce shotgun registration. An amnesty in London this year yielded 50 weapons, including a machine-gun, and a national amnesty starts on September 1. But

nobody in the gun or anti-gun lobby genuinely believes that anything can prevent another Hungerford. Britain's gun culture is now so widely based that it is almost impossible to ensure that guns will never get into the "wrong" hands. There is also the problem of predicting which "right" hands, as Ryan's were once presumed to be, might, without warning, go catastrophically wrong.

There are 160,000 licensed holders of firearms and 840,000 of shotguns in Britain, yet the guns in legitimate circulation are believed to be

There could be  
four million  
illegally-held guns  
in this country

around three times that number. It is possible to hold as many shotguns as one wants on a single licence and, though licence holders must apply for a "variation" to their certificates when they acquire new weapons, these figures are not collated nationally. In addition, according to an estimate in the *Police Review*, there could be some four million illegally-held guns in this country.

With 2,400 legitimate dealers doing good business, the stockpile of weapons in private hands continues to grow apace. Some 140 dealers are currently licensed to sell semi-automatics. But prices for both legitimate and black-market guns are similar: a pistol may cost £250, a rifle or a semi-automatic £350. A gun-owner with a licence and sufficient investment may then join one of Britain's 8,000 gun clubs

where *he* (for the sport is predominantly male) can hone his skills. But one of the fastest-growing areas of gun-play is "survivalism" where members shoot at the silhouette targets of human "enemies".

There are now some 40 "survival schools" around Britain. Magazines like *Desert Eagle*, *Combat and Survival*, *Soldier of Fortune* and *Survival Weaponry* are rising fast in circulation and are available at many newsagents. Their aggressive style bears no relation to the shooting community's traditional journal, *Guns Review*, which has a similar readership to *Horse and Hound*.

Within the gun community, opinions differ on the degree to which "survivalism" represents a worrying threat. Greg Payne, editor of *Survival Weaponry*, which has almost doubled its circulation to 40,000 in the past three years, thinks that survivalism represents an innocent enough "turning away from the modern way of life".

Ken Griffiths, a former soldier who teaches outdoor survival through his Stoke-on-Trent company Selective Activities, is not so sure. "There are a lot of cowboys about, teaching Mickey Mouse tactics. They go running around with crossbows, and they take on a paramilitary ideal which is totally out of the context of a survival situation." Griffiths does not run combat courses—"but when I say to people, 'Don't kill anything unless you need to,' I have had the reply, 'What about people?'"

He believes there is a "Jekyll and Hyde" type attracted to survivalism. "They are normal, fun-loving, everyday types on the surface. Then you go a bit deeper and find they are *killing animals* and you start to worry. The paramilitary side is definitely on the increase. It's very widespread, it's spreading further, and it's extremely dangerous."





PETER HICKS

There are some 8,000 gun clubs in Britain where an enthusiast can hone his skills. Above, shooters compete at Ash Ranges during Pistol 88

There is no doubt that gun-club members frequently entertain reservations about the clientele of their own clubs. Paul Rodgers, a 25-year-old television cameraman and London gun-club member, said: "I've met a few people at my club who have worried me, and that's despite the rigorous vetting—you need two referees before you can join. It's not inconceivable that Hungerford has attracted the wrong kind of shooters to some clubs. I've met guys who I just don't think are straight in the head and thought, 'Christ, they frighten me. I wouldn't let them near a peashooter.'"

I met Rodgers, whose interest in guns began in the Israeli army, in a pub near the Thetford Rifle Range in Suffolk. On a half-mile target he can hit the bull 17 out of 28 times, using a Heckler and Koch 5.56 calibre rifle he affectionately calls Vered, the Hebrew name for Rose. "Your rifle's your life, especially if you've been in the army. You sleep with it. It's your protection, a kind of superdog, even your woman. Everybody I know calls their rifle by a woman's name."

He acknowledged that his interest in guns was more than a hobby. His own house was overflowing with books on the subject: "I'd describe it as a fixation. I want to know everything about guns." He can explain all about exploding and tumbling bullets, banned by the Geneva Convention, which can rip out a person's back. Yet it is not knowledge he readily shares. He never talks about guns to his work-mates, for instance. "People who don't know about guns get frightened very easily. If my interest was widely known, they'd think I was a lunatic. Shooting is an interest you can only share with shooters."

Rodgers naturally had no time for Ryan, but agreed that any gun was likely to affect the imagination of its owner. "There have been times when I've hated work so much I've

laughed at the idea of walking in and blowing the whole [TV] studio away. But then I'd have to face the police marksman outside, wouldn't I? And everyone feels like that about work sometimes. There's also the neighbour's dog that craps on the lawn. I've thought of blowing him away, too. The point is, I never would."

**B**ut relying on the self-restraint of people with private arsenals is not the most comforting form of gun control. While police are supposed to check that gun-licence applicants are not of "unsound mind or intemperate habits", the Ryan case undermined any confidence in their system, especially as Ryan was known in his neighbourhood for beating up his mother and threatening others with airguns (he also had alcoholic tendencies). Peter Sarony, Secretary General of the Shooting Foundation, says that the Thames Valley Police force, notoriously strict, nonetheless gave Ryan a firearms licence within 24 hours of his applying. He used his Beretta pistol to shoot eight people.

The system may work a bit better now; after all, nobody wants to be the policeman who licenses another Ryan. To test it, I went to the Tottenham Court Road police station and asked for both shotgun and firearms certificate application forms. The sergeant on duty gave me the shotgun application without query, but seemed suspicious when I asked for the firearms form. He did not think they had any at the station: could I wait? One was eventually supplied; but had it been a delaying tactic? He suggested I take them away and return them to my local station where my applications would be thoroughly vetted. The sergeant emphasized that the mental history of any applicant would be thoroughly investigated. When I told him a close relative of mine does have a history of mental illness, he thought my chances of getting

a firearms certificate were non-existent.

I then went to 12 gun shops, explaining my interest in buying a semi-automatic AK 47 such as Ryan used, and met with an encouraging lack of success. Most were prepared to explain the different models and ammunition, but none would sell me one without seeing my firearms certificate. In four shops they asked to see my certificate immediately, and thanked me for not wasting their time when I replied that I was still applying for it. The shortest answer I got was "sod off".

It might be thought that this new vigilance at street level, combined with Home Secretary Douglas Hurd's new Firearms (Amendment) Bill, will automatically improve the situation. When the bill becomes law (any time before October), the Government will be empowered to confiscate the 10,000 semi-automatics (i.e. self-loading with rapid fire) which are in circulation, giving their owners 50 per cent of their value in compensation. Hurd is also pledged to provide an extra 450 police officers for shotgun registration duties; he has personal reasons for believing that police sanctions can work—in 1975 he was fined £5 for failing to renew his own shotgun licence.

The gun lobby, however, does not see things his way, and is conducting a vociferous rear-guard action against the Bill. Colin Greenwood, a former policeman and now editor of *Guns Review*, says of it: "Like so much else that is happening these days, it's dangerously authoritarian."

"In response to Hungerford, Hurd panicked. He's declared war on the legitimate shooting community. If he'd sat down and talked to legitimate shooters, they'd have co-operated with any proposal that would reduce firearms abuse. No one has a greater vested interest in keeping guns out of the hands of criminals and lunatics than they do. This Bill will greatly in-



crease the number of guns on the black market. It doesn't seem as though anyone has done any research. What Hurd has done is empty the wastepaper basket of the Home Office all over the floor of the House of Commons."

There are two strands to the gun lobby's argument. One is that the right to a gun should be seen almost as a civil liberty—rather like the American Right to Bear Arms. Why should the state harass members of the respectable shooting community, comprising as it does sportsmen, farmers and businessmen who may join a shooting club for the same reasons as others play golf?

**T**he other strand is that gun controls rarely work. Until the end of the First World War, anyone could possess a gun. Since 1920, when the first firearms controls were introduced to prohibit the open sale of Thompson sub-machine-guns, the firearms legislation has operated on the assumption that strict licensing laws would result in effective firearms control.

The war overturned this applecart when demobbed soldiers brought home captured weapons as souvenirs which eventually fell into underground circulation. Ryan himself possessed a Thompson and a Bergman machine pistol, both Second World War issue. So, given the strength of our own underground market, and the fact that it can be easily replenished via the Continent—semi-automatics are not banned anywhere else in Europe—the gun lobby argues that the main beneficiaries of the new legislation will be black-market dealers.

It similarly claims that shotgun registration will be very costly and ineffective. After several killings in Australia, the state of Victoria decided to try it, but abandoned the register three years later after the public failed to comply. Victoria police estimated that they had registered less than half the number of shotguns in the state. New Zealand had a similar experience.

The great exemplar of the argument that guns do not kill people—only people kill people—is, of course, Switzerland, where every male is a present or past member of the national



IMPACT PHOTOS

#### Under the new legislation every shotgun will have to be registered

militia, and has to have a semi-automatic rifle in the home by law. Not only has Switzerland never had a Hungerford, it possesses one of the lowest rates of armed crime in the world.

Philosophically, it is easy to frame an argument for the proposition that everybody should have guns, or the converse—that nobody should have a gun at all. The difficulty lies in deciding who, on a selective basis, *can* own guns. To those outside the gun lobby, Hungerford demonstrated the acute need for a more rigorous selection process.

The law, as even the Home Secretary concedes, has its limits. "There is no point," Hurd has said, "in pretending that by making changes in the law we guarantee . . . against the quiet, withdrawn citizen who answers every question,

fills in every form, and keeps every law until the moment comes when he commits an atrocious crime." But there are good grounds for making this progression more difficult, while the police see the Firearms Bill as strengthening their drive against more conventional crime. Police Federation chairman Lesley Curtis thinks it might be what is needed to combat "the rapid growth in firearms-related crime".

**S**o will there be another massacre like Hungerford? In America and Australia the evidence suggests that if you get one, you tend to get another. In a small, quietly-policed community, Ryan rampaged for hours before he was stopped. In copycat attacks in the more heavily-policed environments of Bristol and Northampton, the perpetrators killed a total of five people, and the potential for more murders remained.

Paul Rodgers and the other gun buffs I talked to all emphasised that the weapon must not be blamed for the actions of a lunatic when "something snaps". It is possible to indulge in mass killing by many other means. The metaphor of a car driver suddenly deciding to mow down pedestrians was frequently used. But guns are specifically designed to kill; cars are not. This difference becomes even more considerable when on television and film screens every day there is a dangerous juxtaposition of glamorous fantasy and lethal reality.

In *First Blood*, the founder film of a now interminable *Rambo* series, Sylvester Stallone walks into a town and blows the shoppers away with a machine-gun. Not untypical movie-going fare. Indeed, there were those who felt they were watching a movie when Ryan, the young no-hoper, who liked to affect a Rambo-style headband, made his last march through Hungerford in paramilitary gear.



NETWORK

Britain now has summer camps which will teach the under-16s to handle rifles

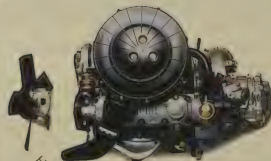


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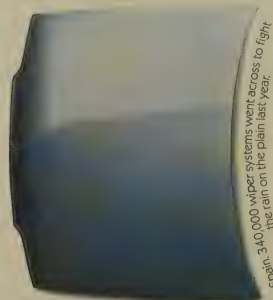
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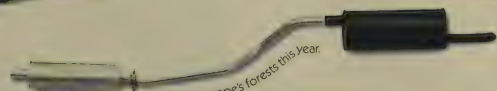
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# BLACK SEPTEMBER FOR THE UNIONS

The trade unions are on the brink of far-reaching change. The electricians face expulsion at the Trades Union Congress conference in September, yet their policy of no-strike, single-union deals has the tacit support of the more progressive unions.

DON MACINTYRE distinguishes friend from foe in the battle ahead—and identifies the roots of the crisis.

Viewers of *A Very British Coup*, Channel 4's recent brilliantly televised version of Chris Mullin's thriller of life under a future left-wing Labour government, will know that the fictional United Power Workers' Union nearly brings down the administration by imposing a national work-to-rule in the middle of winter. We learn that the union was once in Communist hands but, following a ferocious internal power struggle at the end of the 1950s, it elected a leader on the right wing of the Labour party. Opposed to unilateral disarmament, and the major union in power supply, it is an unashamed caricature of the existing electricians' union.

When the fictional union's leader, Reg Smith, finally decides that there is scant support for continued industrial action, he resorts to the time-honoured device of a union leader who knows he must settle; he rings the general secretary of the Trades Union Congress and tells him: "We're ready to talk." Conspiracy theorists who believe that life could imitate Mr Mullin's art should ponder the sobering thought that this might be impossible under a government of the 1990s for, when the moment comes, the electricians' union may no longer even be in the TUC.

The real electricians' union is unlikely to be in cahoots with the CIA, as the television series implies the fictional union might be. But the prospect of a union which is powerful, and which is also opposed to the idea of the hard left, is enough to frighten any Benite MP hopeful of office. Even if the Mullin scenario is politically implausible, that the Electrical, Electronic, Telecommunications and Plumbing Union is cutting its ties with the TUC is real enough.

For nearly three decades the electricians' union has infuriated the traditional trade union left—by its reliance on secret ballots of the silent majority of its members, by its industrial moderation, and by its relentless criticisms of unproductive militancy. But its independent spirit has always been restrained by the collective discipline of the TUC. What is gradually dawning on many trade union leaders is that it

could pose an even greater threat to unity outside the TUC than inside it.

In Mullin's 1982 novel Reg Smith does little justice to Eric Hammond, the electricians' real general secretary. The fictional character is a placeman "who saw which way the wind was blowing and weighed in on the side of the moderates". But "moderate" is a term that does not fit Hammond. He is proud of his part in a strike by his members in the electrical-conducting industry over a decade ago which won them one of the best—and most lasting—deals in the private sector. As a Labour councillor in his native Gravesend, he was too bloody-minded to wear traditional robes. In 1975 he dared to stand against Frank Chapple, the born-again anti-Communist who preceded him in the job and dominated the union for almost two decades. He once resigned from the union negotiating committee in the power-supply industry because he thought it was in danger of selling out the members. Yet Hammond remains the *bête noire* of the traditional class warriors of Britain's labour movement. As the general secretary of a union which was electing its leaders by secret postal ballot a quarter of a century before it was legally required to do so, the 58-year-old Hammond has a great deal in common with his upwardly mobile, skilled, even technocratic membership. He is a DIY enthusiast, and a keen photographer and gardener. He has lived in Kent almost all his life and he lists his clubs in *Who's Who* as "Northfleet Traders and Gravesend Rugby".

He is brash and bespectacled now but, as a teenager, he was goalkeeper in an ice hockey team when he was evacuated to Newfoundland during the war. Whether or not that helped to thicken his skin, today he revels in the howls of outrage that greet his set-piece denunciations of trade union traditionalism. In 1979, when the Municipal Workers mounted a strike at the Isle of Grain power station site, close to the oil refinery where he once worked as a shop steward, Hammond broke every union taboo by riding enthusiastically across the picket line with his members in the first coach. In 1985, when Arthur Scargill secured a Labour party pledge



to free all National Union of Mineworkers members imprisoned during the 1984 strike, Hammond declared to a chorus of catcalls that the miners had been "lions led by donkeys". Asked a few minutes afterwards if he enjoyed the barracking he provokes on such occasions, Hammond replied crisply: "If I didn't enjoy it I wouldn't do it."

His single-minded pursuit of market trade unionism and, in particular, a series of single-union, strike-free deals that he has negotiated with a small number of employers, have

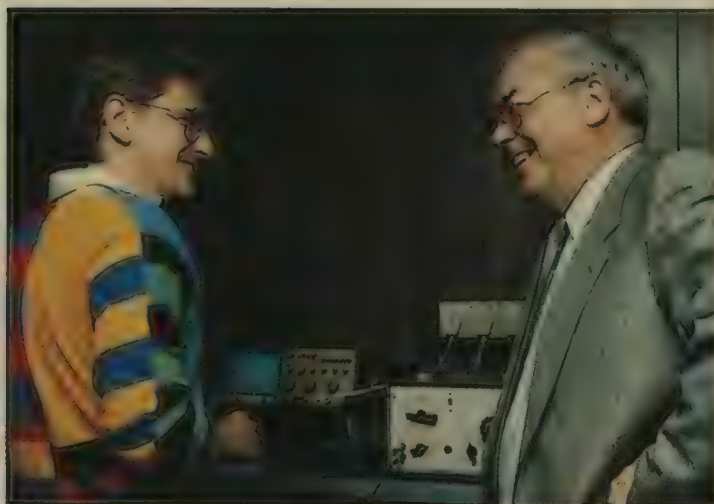
Today's leaders  
are a long way from  
the cloth-  
capped union  
bosses of the 60s

brought him into direct conflict with the majority of other unions, and precipitated a split in the TUC. From first-hand experience, Hammond knew the attraction to employers of such deals. When the EETPU negotiated one of the earliest, in 1983 at Immos, the ultra-modern microchip factory in Newport, the management had considered doing away with unions altogether. It would certainly never have condoned the multi-union bargaining and if the agreement contained a clause requiring compulsory arbitration, Hammond judged that a

price well worth paying.

Hammond has made no secret of his determination to cope with declining membership by whatever means at his disposal. The services the union provides—from electronics training to mortgage advice, from second-hand car sales to free legal help for members' families—are deliberately designed to appeal to workers who might not otherwise think of joining a union. He has gone further by circulating glossy brochures and videos to employers, citing the virtues of recognising the EETPU, and his union





Cudham Hall, left, the EETPU's well-equipped and luxurious training centre. Right, general secretary Eric Hammond talks with an electronics trainee.

played a crucial role in the recruitment of new labour for Rupert Murdoch in his move to Wapping. Hammond, recognising that he may have gone too far in ignoring trade union orthodoxy, parted company with the EETPU official most intimately involved. He has shrewdly courted publicity, and he once invited three Conservative Cabinet Ministers to the union's well-equipped training centre at Cudham.

Much of this outrages his opponents. But to understand the Hammond strategy, one must remember that Mrs Thatcher came to office intent on reducing trade union power, and convinced that to do so would be popular with the electorate. The 1980 and 1982 Employment Acts progressively cut away the legal union rights of picketing, sympathy strikes and the closed shop. In the 1983 election Norman Tebbit's shrewdly populist Employment Bill had a central place in the Tory manifesto. The Bill, which became the 1984 Trades Union Act, forced unions to hold secret ballots not only for strikes but for the election of officials.

The 1983 election results, in which only 39 per cent of trade unionists voted for the Labour party, deeply depressed the trade union movement, and made a number of union leaders, including Len Murray, then general secretary of the TUC, realise that the legislation could not simply be dismantled by a new Labour government. Indeed, it showed that a majority of trade unionists did not even want this. But the crisis for trade unions was not just a matter of legislation.

The post-1979 recession, coupled with the Government's refusal to support "lame duck" industries, caused the demise of the large factory plant, traditionally the home of multi-union, closed-shop trade unionism. The immediate problem for unions was the decline in membership due to unemployment. The number of members in TUC affiliates came down by 25 per cent from its late 70s total of 12 million. Another problem was that there were one million fewer workers in closed shops in 1984 than there had been in 1979. The closed shop, not only in manufacturing but also in the public services, had guaranteed members for the big unions and hence their financial and political strengths.

Worse still, from the unions' point of view, the new work places had little or no background



Bill Jordan, responsible for the single-union deal with Nissan in Sunderland

of trade unionism. MacDonalds, the fast-food chain, now employ more people in this country than does the whole of the shipbuilding industry. In manufacturing, the buoyant labour markets were in the Thames Valley rather than Manchester's Trafford Park, Silicon Glen rather than Clydeside, Cambridge rather than Sheffield or Doncaster. On the hypermarket tills, the assembly lines in the flourishing high-tech industries, in the security firms and the bingo halls, a growing, youthful, often female and part-time workforce was frequently as disinterested in joining unions as employers were reluctant to recognise them.

How can these problems be solved?

**B**ill Jordan and Gavin Laird of the Amalgamated Engineering Union, John Edmonds of the General Municipal, Boilermakers and Allied Trades' Union and Ron Todd of the Transport and General Workers' Union are the leaders of Britain's three biggest unions. In appearance all four are a long way from the baggy-trousered, cloth-capped union bosses of the 60s and 70s. None of them actually uses a Filofax, but otherwise they are indistinguishable from the senior managers they meet regularly across the negotiating table. All have well-cut suits and executive briefcases. Not far away a chauffeur-driven Rover, Ford Granada or Vauxhall

Cavalier will be waiting, carphone in place.

Despite their similar appearance, these men look at their jobs in startlingly different ways. Bill Jordan, the engineers' president, is probably Eric Hammond's closest ally in the TUC. Indeed, he is at present talking about a merger with Hammond and the EETPU which would create a new "super union" of about 1.3 million members. A boyish-looking 52-year-old, non-smoking, non-drinking, and soft-spoken with a distinctive Birmingham accent, Jordan is on the right, a multilateralist who believes in market economics. He is a furnaceman's son who passed the 11-plus but went to a secondary-modern school because his parents could not afford the cost of grammar-school uniforms.

Shy in a way that belies his toughness, Jordan believes in single-union deals where it is necessary to achieve union recognition. His union had doubts about the arrival of Nissan at Sunderland—understandably, given the threat it posed to existing British car manufacturers where the AEU had a secure base. But he made a single-union deal with the Japanese company—after the AEU and the GMB had failed.

He left school at 15 and became a fitter at the engineering company GKN. He has taught himself a great deal that he could not afford to stay at school to learn and is one of the few members of the TUC General Council with a season ticket to the Royal Shakespeare Theatre at Stratford. More relevant to the modestly-paid £20,000 a year job, he is also one of the few union leaders to have considered the implications of the European internal market and the importance of unions linking internationally to negotiate with multinationals. This shows foresight, for European Commission President Jacques Delors is already working on plans for 1992 which, if realised, would force all EEC countries to match West Germany which legally allows employees a bigger say in how their companies are run.

In Gavin Laird, Jordan has a like-minded general secretary, notwithstanding an often strained personal relationship. Laird has even longer experience of trying to wrench a traditional craft union into the 20th century. He is one of the few current union leaders to have met Mrs Thatcher while she led the opposition, at a lunch convened for her at the offices of *The Times* by its then editor, William Rees-Mogg.





**Gavin Laird made a lasting impression on Mrs Thatcher when they met over lunch**

Also present were Harry Urwin of the TGWU and Jim Slater of the seamen's union, both now retired. Once in the Young Communist League, and formerly a militant engineering union convenor at the Singer plant in Clydebank, Scotland, Laird had an exhilarating argument with Mrs Thatcher which dominated the lunch. It was her favourite kind of debate—with the future Prime Minister denouncing union restrictive practices, and the socialist Scotsman countering with the waste of human resources caused by inept British management. Whether it was because Laird did not waste time by defending the worst excesses of trade unionism, or because he was a good-looking, well-dressed and articulate 40-year-old, Mrs Thatcher took to him. One result was that she put him into the Scott inquiry into civil servants' pensions, and later on the Highlands and Islands Development Board. Another was that Laird thought deeply about the changes the unions might have to make if Mrs Thatcher won the next election.

It is not surprising, therefore, that he should have been one of the main participants in the affair that created the biggest shock in British industry this year. His attempt to forge a single-union deal with Ford for a new electronics plant at Dundee, bringing 2,000 jobs with it, brought him into collision with Ron Todd, general secretary of Britain's biggest union, the TGWU.

The TGWU has a formidable reputation for militancy, demonstrated by the Government's continued hesitation in abolishing the anachronistic dock labour scheme for fear of a port strike. Yet despite Todd's continued declarations of support for both the miners in their strike and the printers at Wapping, his own lorry driver members continued to cross picket lines in both disputes.

Until he became a full-time union official, Todd worked for Ford as an assembly-line worker at Dagenham. He is a good-humoured, straight-talking Londoner who has a passion for collecting fossils and Victorian music covers. He had the courage to re-run his own election in 1984 after complaints of ballot-rigging in the first one and he has coined one of the most quoted judgments on the dilemma of British unions in the 80s—that "you can't expect a bloke with a new car, a VCR and two weeks' holiday in Marbella every year to come to

you and say: 'help me, I'm downtrodden'."

For all that, he remains, in trade union terms, a conservative—and the term is not merely ironic. For it is Todd and Arthur Scargill who have been arguing most strenuously for the reassertion of "traditional union values" in the face of the clamour for single-union deals and other concessions to the market. There are some who think that, left to himself, Todd would show more adaptability, but he was elected with the backing of the traditional left-wing machine in the union and he still depends on it for support.

As a result, Todd has not only led the attack on Hammond, but also been a source of irritation to the becalmed Neil Kinnock. The TGWU, with its 1.25 million block vote in the Labour party conference, is a formidable adversary for any Labour leader, sponsored by the union—as is Kinnock—or not.

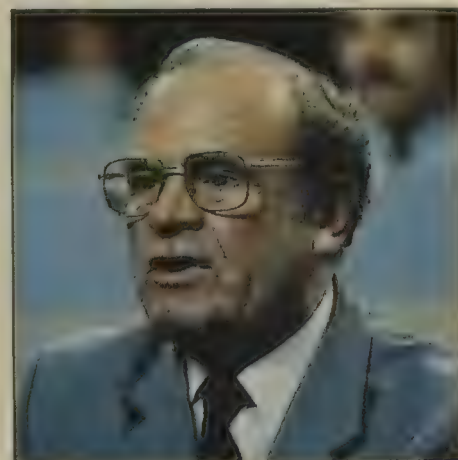
In the old days, men like Arthur Deakin, Frank Cousins and Jack Jones drew their personal authority in the TGWU from the fact that they were the only officials of the union elected by the whole membership. They also had the strength of personality to control the executive when necessary. This authority was forfeited by Moss Evans, and his successor, Ron Todd, has never fully recovered it. It is not too fanciful to say that on every issue which helped Labour to lose the 1987 election—from public ownership to defence, from tax policy to trade union power—Neil Kinnock's chances of victory are directly related to his unproven ability to stand up to the TGWU executive.

**S**tanding between the EETPU and the AEU on one wing, and the TGWU on the other, is the GMWU. It has 840,000 members, with a wide base in power stations, manufacturing, local authorities and catering. John Edmonds, its leader, tall, balding and bespectacled, differs from his colleagues at the head of the biggest unions by being a graduate (Oriel College, Oxford) who has never had a permanent job on the shop-floor. Edmonds is critical of Hammond's approach—but he has also thought deeply about the changing market for trade unionism, and the inadequacy of old-style slogans to meet it. "We have to recognise that the industrial world has moved away from us," he says. One traditional union leader at last year's TUC conference called for more recruitment to "increase the solidarity of the working class." Edmonds says: "Try that phrase on a check-out

operator at Tesco's and I guess she would think you came from the moon."

Edmonds argues that in the struggle to recruit new members, unions have to find a new appeal to the individual rather than to the collective. He also recognises that the unions' deep-rooted, male-dominated conservatism is still a handicap. The largest source of potential new members is women, yet branch meetings are frequently arranged at times inconvenient for them. Edmonds points out: "Women say, almost without exception, that they would like more flexible hours; yet this demand is almost never voiced by manual unions."

Edmonds's line shows that he and Hammond agree about a great deal, even though they are on opposite sides in the present crisis. Yet Hammond's union, already suspended from the TUC, faces all-out expulsion at the TUC conference in September, while Edmonds, Todd and, for the moment, Jordan and Laird will remain within it. Even a decade ago the prospect of permanent expulsion from the TUC would have been unthinkable. Nothing could



**Ron Todd, general secretary of the TGWU, with its widespread reputation for militancy**

be a clearer sign of the times than the fact that Hammond now believes he can survive outside the TUC, for all the threats by unions within it that they will feel free to poach his members. Hammond will no doubt make overtures to non-TUC unions as diverse as the Union of Democratic Mineworkers—made up in the main of the Nottinghamshire pitmen who defied Scargill's 1984-85 strike—and the Royal College of Nursing, whose successful lobbying and campaigning for nurses' pay has been underpinned by a no-strike policy, to join him in his new life outside the TUC. He knows that to most of his rank-and-file members the TUC is a remote mechanism, in a way that neither their own union, nor even the Labour party is. He put his strategy with stunning clarity at the 1985 TUC conference when a similar threat first reared its head: "Put us out of the TUC and declare open season on our members and we will not be quiescent, waiting to be carved up. We will do what is necessary to survive. You ain't seen nothing yet." It is a menacing message for his opponents in the TUC: Hammond believes that the average worker has more sympathy with his brand of trade unionism.

Whether or not the conference in September has a last-minute change of heart and heeds his message, market unionism is here to stay ●



**John Edmonds is critical of Hammond's approach but they agree about a great deal**





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# ILN FESTIVAL AWARDS

## LONDONER OF THE YEAR

This proved to be the most difficult category. But the final decision was for someone whose work had directly affected millions of Londoners: the director of Network SouthEast, Chris Green.

Chris Green is responsible for all rail services in the London area, from the international termini to the smallest cross-London line. Since his appointment in November, 1985, Green has revolutionised British Rail in the capital, creating a red, white and blue network from disparate elements, extending and improving services, and opening the first rail link across London.

Thameslink is his greatest achievement so far. The lines joining King's Cross and Southern Region have always existed, but it was Green who recognised their importance and reopened them for passenger traffic. There were technical problems: the two services used different trains. Green pushed through the project at an incredible speed, opening a derelict tunnel and commissioning a brand-new train which could switch from overhead current to rail conductor. The Thameslink opened on May 16 this year, at a cost of £71 million.

Green's task has been twofold: to improve services and cut dependence on government subsidy. Within two years he has done both. The subsidy has declined from £30 million to £155 million. Network SouthEast now carries 15 per cent more people on its rush hour trains, and 25 per cent more on its off-peak trains.

Dissatisfied commuters complain that they are an abused, captive market. Only last month, 55 trains were cancelled on a single



**Londoner of the Year, Chris Green:** His greatest achievement so far has been Thameslink: improving rail services for millions of Londoners

day. Green shrugs this off: "They forget we run 8,000 trains". He is trying to please his customers with faster trains, cleaner carriages and stations which are part of a £1.4 billion "Five Year Plan" for the Network.

As the capital grows, Network

SouthEast is growing with it, spurred on by Chris Green. With an extra 250,000 people moving south each year, there are ever more commuters. The belt is spreading. Green is currently electrifying the lines to the north of the capital, to cope with an

increased demand from Cambridge, Huntingdon and Ely. As Green himself says, "The Metro-land of the 1980s stretches for 80 to 100 miles around the capital".

Metroland, Mark I, created the familiar landscape of the London suburbs. As Green continues to

1988 marks the first Festival of London. Between July 23 and August 7 there will be a series of events and exhibitions celebrating the diversity of the capital. The *ILN* is celebrating the occasion by presenting awards to people or organisations who have changed the face of London.

We wanted to acknowledge the larger organisations who had had a visible effect on the capital and recognise smaller groups and individuals who had worked more quietly on a local level.

We asked for nominations from every sector of London life to cover five categories: Innovation,



Judges, Lady Blackstone and Sir Hugh Casson

Environment, Development, Entertainment and Londoner of the Year. Suggestions were many and varied. Several people thought a booby prize should also be

included—and nominated the M25.

There were five judges: Lady Blackstone, Master of Birkbeck College; Sir Hugh Casson, former President of the Royal Academy and one of the masterminds of the 1951 Festival of Britain; Max Hebditch, Director of the Museum of London; the Duke of Westminster and James Bishop, Editor-in-Chief of the *ILN*.

The judges quickly excluded many of the contenders, Sir Hugh Casson gleefully taking the lead: "Is this one a corpse? Yes? Good." The Docklands Light Railway, the City Airport, ThamesLine, Greenland Dock soon fell. Each judge had his or her

particular favourite: The Duke of Westminster was very taken with the Port of London Authority nomination. "I'll go for the Gulper," he enthused. The final decisions were particularly difficult.

Each winner will be presented with a statuette displaying a stream of balloons designed by sculptor Victoria Ambrey Smith. These come in different colours according to category: silver for Innovation, verdigris for Environment, bronze for Development, copper for Entertainment and gold for the Londoner of the Year.

SANCHIA BERG

## ENTERTAINMENT

**Winner:** The Hackney Empire.

**Commended:** The Theatre Museum, opened in Covent Garden last year after a 20-year battle for life.

**Special mention:** The Mountaintop Ski Centre, the longest dry ski slope in London, opened last year in Newham.

Once, the Hackney Empire was famed for its shows, but after the war it declined into a sleazy vaudeville venue. Eventually it suffered that terrible fate of so many London theatres: it became a Mecca Bingo Hall. Then came CAST.

A small touring cabaret group, CAST, came to the rescue of the old theatre. They took over the lease, renovated the building and reopened it to the public on its 57th birthday, December 9, 1986.

Since then the group, now renamed Hackney New Variety, have restored the Empire to its position as a leading London theatre. As CAST, they had launched "alternative" comedians like Ben Elton and Harry Enfield. They put on shows of "new variety": jugglers with drama, with poetry, with comedians.

The group, led by Roland Muldoon, have continued these programmes at the Hackney Empire, and added to the repertoire new plays and concerts by musicians from around the world. Hackney New Variety have not forgotten the theatre's heritage. They also host traditional variety shows with the British Music Hall Society.

Although Hackney New Variety are now filling the Empire's 800 seats most nights of the week, they had to borrow money to repay the first instalment of the £150,000 still owing to Mecca.



**Roland Muldoon (third from left) and staff outside the Hackney Empire** which specialises in "new variety" and music-hall bills

However, Roland Muldoon is confident that they will keep the theatre, and he is planning to renovate the interior and open the top galleries, increasing the capacity to 1,200.

Muldoon needs to raise £3 million, and has already begun a fund-raising drive. Friends of Hackney Empire, like comedian Lenny Henry, have bought seats,

and the theatre will stage benefits in the months ahead.

August 8 marks the next step in the restoration: DOMESDAY Muldoon is reinstating the distinctive golden domes which Mecca removed from the Empire's facade. The Hackney Empire will return, a Victorian palace once more, in the grey slope of Mare Street.



## INNOVATION

**Winner:** Port of London Authority for the Floating Driftwood Collector.

**Commented:** The Corporation of London for the new lighting system in Tower Bridge, which makes it dramatically three-dimensional. Designed and installed by the London Electricity Board, Tarmac and Phillips.

**Special mention:** The London Ambulance Service, who set out last May to raise £1 million to buy cardiac defibrillators for every ambulance in London. The Regional Health Authorities could not provide the money immediately for this vital emergency equipment, so the LAS have been organising open days, events, and sponsorship to purchase and install the machines as soon as possible. So far they have raised £325,000 and bought 87 defibrillators.

Every year, the fleet of PLA driftwood vessels pick up 1,000 tons of debris floating on the Thames. They collect everything: industrial waste, refuse, trees, even the occasional body or unexploded bomb.

In 1987 there was a record amount of rubbish. The hurricane played its part, and new building sites around the river used it as a floating dustbin. In January, 1988 the PLA introduced a completely innovative machine to deal with

this: the Floating Driftwood Collector, or "Garbage Gulp". It has already picked up an extra 450 tons of debris.

The Collector is a two-hulled platform, with baskets underneath, which is moored to a buoy by the riverside, on the outside of a sharp bend. The tide pushes the refuse between the hulls and any debris is trapped in the baskets. As the tide changes, the collector swings round, and continues its work, facing the other way. This allows the PLA to collect driftwood continuously and special "dustbin" vessels pick up the catch daily.

There are currently two collectors moored at Blackfriars Bridge, and the PLA has two more ready to go into operation. Each Collector costs about £10,000 to construct and the PLA are looking for sponsors. The Regalian property company have already volunteered.

Captain Roberts, Marine Services Officer of the PLA, came up with the idea. "I remembered seeing debris collecting between the hulls of vessels and the pontoons, and I realised we could get the tide to do our work for us."

The Collectors could work on any tidal river, but are particularly effective in the Thames, because it flows so fast. The PLA has received inquiries about the Gulpur from all over the world: Australia, Brunei and Hong Kong.



Captain Derek Roberts, aboard a floating driftwood collector which gulps garbage in the Thames by harnessing the tide, wins the *ILN's* Innovation prize for the Port of London Authority

## DEVELOPMENT

**Winner:** Marcopolo Building (Battersea).

**Commented:** Isle of Dogs Self-Build Association, where 46 people have just finished constructing their own houses, on land purchased from the LDDC. The cost of the houses ranges from £36,000 to £55,000. Elsewhere in the Isle of Dogs, an equivalent three-bedroom house costs about £150,000.

**Special mention:** Michelin Building (Fulham Road), restored and redeveloped by Sir Terence Conran.

The judges decided to give the 1988 *ILN* Award to an outstanding, controversial new London landmark: the Marcopolo, in Queensdown Road, Battersea. It is currently the new home of the *Observer* newspaper.

The developer, Ian Pollard, delights in being provocative. Outspoken and individualistic at pin-striped gatherings, he stands out in pony-tail and black leather. Since he started his consultancy, Flycard, in 1972, he has fought a running battle with the architectural establishment.



Ian Pollard: Development award for the Marcopolo in Battersea

Pollard trained as a chartered surveyor, not as an architect and calls himself "a jack of all trades and master of none". His brand of property development gives him the maximum degree of independence. He secures a site, borrows the money, plans and puts up the building, and then repays the loan by letting it. Pollard explains: "An architect is limited by the client: the client's own design aspirations, his financial resources. As my own client, I'm in control."

The Marcopolo was built in this way, the initial £15 million raised from the Universities' Superannuation Scheme. He originally intended the building to be covered with white ceramic tiles, but he came across an obscure material called Neo-Paris. The crystallised glass finish took his fancy, and he spent four months tracking down its manufacturer in Japan. The new facing cost four times as much as the tiles would have done, adding millions to the budget. The risk paid off.

The name "Marcopolo" is another Pollard whim. It is derived from the hole in the pediment: the "mark of the Polo mint".



Lea View House wins in the Environment category

## ENVIRONMENT

**Winner:** Hackney Council for Lea View House.

**Commented:** The Waltham City Farm, a "horticultural extravaganza" on a third of an acre of derelict land in Kennington.

**Special mention:** New River Action Group (East London) who have saved the New River from being diverted underground by the Thames Water Authority.

The renovation of Lea View House is an example of community architecture at its best. The estate is in the final stage of a six-year modernisation, which has proved popular with tenants, architects and Hackney councilors alike. The last block will be completed in December this year.

Built in the 1930s, the estate had become a virtual run-down, and the residents were desperate to move out. Hackney Council commissioned a private company, Hunt Thompson Associates, to improve it.

Hunt Thompson adopted a radical solution: working with the tenants, they devised a scheme which has rebuilt the estate from

the inside out. Families now live in "houses"—maisonettes created from the first and second floors of the estate. Each has its own entrance, and front and back gardens. The elderly have a special sheltered accommodation block, complete with warden.

The old London County Council estate has had a facelift. The window frames are red, green, blue and yellow. The flat roofs are now pitched. The central courtyard has been landscaped and new lifts are housed externally.

The improvements have affected the well-being of the tenants themselves. 72 per cent of Lea View residents thought that their health has been better since the renovation.

The crime rate on Lea View has also improved dramatically. One tenant, Brenda Nutley, said she had five break-ins in 10 months on the "old" Lea View, so she bought a fierce dog. Now she has given the dog away. The six years of work have created a stronger community: now everyone looks out for everyone else.

"If I had my pick, I wouldn't live anywhere else" says Mrs. Nutley.



Sacred Cow

# The perfect genius of Samuel Beckett

*L'Image*, the first novel for seven years from the Nobel prize-winning author, Samuel Beckett, was published recently. MARK LAWSON salutes the enigmatic playwright in his own style



*(The lights come up slowly on an expanse of wasteland. There are three naked men, variously submerged in mud. They are Drone, a professor; Laud, a critic; and Numb, a spectator. Numb has a bullet wound in his chest. Drone and Laud are moving their mouths frantically, as if trying to speak a very important word. Finally, the words emerge.)*

**Drone:** Geeceeniiuuusss!  
**Laud:** Geeceeniiuuusss!

*(The lights snap off. Thunderous applause is heard. Then silence and a torch, apparently held by Numb, plays over the faces of Drone and Laud.)*

**Numb:** Is that it?

*(A pause. Slowly, Drone breaks out of his reverie and notices Numb.)*

**Drone:** Are you talking to me?

**Numb:** Yes. I am. Is that it? I mean, two words I counted. I accept we should be grateful for that. Getting verbose in his old age, is he, the old zip-lip? Not quite the "perfect economy", to borrow your own phrase, of, what was that one called, with no words at all? *Fart*, was it?

**Drone:** *Breath*. Or perhaps you are referring to *Act Without Words*. There is, of course, a I and II of that one.

**Numb:** Wouldn't there just be? What does he call this one?

**Drone:** *Genius*, and in the title we should recognise the master's characteristic irony in the labelling of his work, is quintessential late Beckett. In the economy of the play's dramatic vocabulary...

**Numb:** Two bleeding words, pardon my French.

**Drone:** In the economy of the play's dramatic vocabulary, we detect Beckett's typically rueful

acknowledgement that there is nothing left to say. That language is cracked, failed and dead...

**Numb:** Cracked, failed, dead and playing at the Riverside. That's the paradox I can't get round. Why doesn't the just shut up?

**Drone:** And yet, in the very perfection of choice of the single word that is spoken—spoken twice, a classic Beckettian joke—there is an acknowledgement, which we can only call life-affirming, that the right word, plucked from the rotting carcass of dead language, and spoken at the right volume, can redeem, in some small measure, the world.

*(Drone falls forward, exhausted. Numb waits motionless. Almost immediately, Laud begins to speak at immense speed and with salivating enthusiasm.)*

**Laud:** Anyone who cares about world theatre

has until Saturday to make a trip to the Riverside Studios to see *Genius*, a remarkable late flowering in the bitter chill winter of our greatest living playwright. Beckett has, it is fair to say, written longer plays...

**Numb:** Not very much longer.

**Laud:** But he has rarely written a better one. The situation of the play is simple but, in its verbal economy and seismic moral reverberation, the drama is a major late statement, given a production fully alive to every nuance in the text. It is a short play with a long after-taste.

*(Laud and Drone fall silent. Numb switches on all the stage lights and begins to circle the other characters.)*

**Numb:** I mean, I grant you that *Waiting For Godot* was important—I'll even venture in *Krapp's Last Tape*—but doesn't it ever strike

you that it's all a joke against people like you two, daring you to find profundity in its all too simple symbols, begging you to rationalise serious intent behind its deliberate, mocking tedium?

**Drone:** Never.

**Laud:** Never.

**Drone:** It is, finally, too simple to see his work as a joke against critics and audiences, to see Beckett as the practical joker of world literature. Is it not the case that he is, rather, joining with his critics in a joke against existence?

**Numb:** Oh, God, I think you're probably about to give me the one about the really important thing about Beckett being how incredibly funny his work is.

*(Laud and Drone suddenly begin to slap their thighs and stomachs, rolling around the stage hooting with laughter as if they are sharing in*

*some private joke.)*

**Laud:** So funny!

**Drone:** So funny!

**Laud:** Laughter in the dark!

**Drone:** Gallows humour, in a very real sense! **Laud:** While Beckett does not write jokes in the accepted—and, one would have to say, bastardised—sense of the word joke...

**Numb:** You can say that again. Knock knock! Who's there? Godot! Godot who? God only knows how he gets away with it!

**Drone:** It is a dark joke, of which the punchline is extinction, but Beckett's humour—for those who are able to appreciate it—contains some of the funniest jokes in the world. I am thinking particularly here of the one about the undertaker and the harlot who meet in the box clinic...

*(Laud and Drone are by now almost hysterical with laughter. Numb produces from his pocket an extremely thin volume—the publishing equivalent of an after-dinner mint—which he holds up. It is L'Image, the Master's first work for seven years which consists of a 1,200-word single sentence about a woman, a packet of sandwiches, and a dog washing its genitals.)*

**Numb:** And now this! A new prose work by Beckett—they call it a novel but I've seen nouvelle cuisine menus with more words—is released to the breathless world. It consists of one long sentence, describing a man with his tongue stuck in mud watching a dog licking its genitals.

*(Numb throws the book down between Laud and Drone. They unceremoniously fight for it, tugging it between them until finally each is left with a single page.)*

**Laud:** Any new work by Beckett is an event but, in this brief piece of prose, in which canine testicles become a symbol for more global concerns, the *vieux maître*—for such he must surely now be called—has surpassed himself. In a sense, the inevitable career development for this writer would be total unbroken silence.

**Numb:** Hurrah for that!

**Drone:** But his refusal to sink into final silence is itself an acknowledgement that there are still words which must be spoken. The last despairing yell in the abyss is, in the fullest sense, a denial of that abyss.

*(Numb lurches towards Drone and Laud. He is by now hysterical.)*

**Numb:** But can't you see! The old bugger's laughing at you from his Paris flat! That is exactly what you're supposed to say! It's just a long streak of nonsense about a dog washing its balls.

*(Laud and Drone force Numb under the mud and suffocate him. They stand on the patch where he was last seen.)*

**Laud:** Geeceeniiuuus!  
**Drone:** Geeceeniiuuus!

*(The lights snap out.)*







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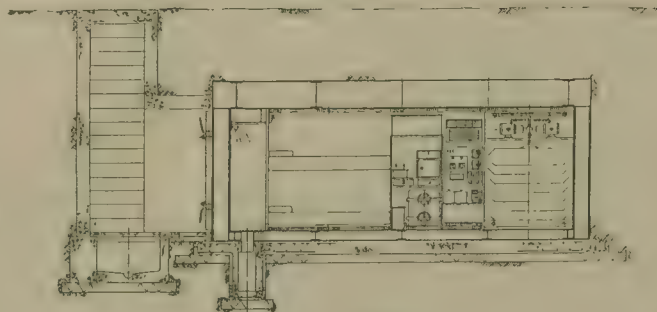
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# BATTERSEA'S RICH, NEW SKYLINE

By Caroline Ross



LANDSCAPE/NICK BARLOW

The times may be changing, but so too is *The Observer*, now relocated to the Marcopolo building on Chelsea Bridge Road

In *Up The Junction*, Nell Dunn's famous 60s novel set in Battersea, her heroines Sylv and Rube walked to Clapham Junction past the "pay-as-you-wear shop and a pawnbroker's which paid 'top prices for gold, silver and artificial teeth'." Battersea 25 years ago was a byword for decrepitude, the butt of variety comics who invoked its stray dogs' home, its funfairs and monumental power station. The "sinkhole of Surrey", it was once called.

But such disparagement is inappropriate today. Docklands aside, no other area of

London is undergoing such dramatic improvement, a change symbolised by the relocation of *The Observer* newspaper to the glittering Marcopolo building overlooking the Thames, and by the plans to transform the shell of the old power station into a tourist attraction surpassing even Madame Tussaud's and Alton Towers theme park.

Certain council-built tower blocks in Battersea are now decidedly *des res*, chief among them being The Falcons, the former Livingstone council estate sold to the Regalian property developers. It has been colonised by

young professionals taking advantage of Clapham Junction's fast rail link to the City and a communal leisure centre built by Regalian which incorporates a swimming-pool, a "whirlpool spa", gymnasium and conservatory. It has an imposing gateway, with falcon-topped pillars. Yet nothing else distinguishes the grim exterior of its 360 apartments from the bleak York Way council estate to its rear. For a two-bedroom, two-bathroom apartment, the price is £127,000.

Indeed, property prices in Battersea have quadrupled during the last five years, settling



down, according to Winkworth's estate agents, "to about a 16 per cent annual rise". Obligatory reading is *Southside* magazine, a glossy, free publication with Dufy-esque covers and a 60,000 circulation. In between the property ads, which provide the bulk of its revenue, the reader finds articles on "How to find a good butler" and which tradesmen are prepared to deliver a champagne breakfast, complete with quails' eggs and croissants, to one's door.

House values have, of course, been rising dramatically all over London, but the speed of Battersea's transformation has won direct government approval. It is seen as providing a blueprint for successful inner-city regeneration. Not surprisingly, Wandsworth Borough Council, which administers Battersea, is beloved of Mrs Thatcher. Wandsworth covers the three constituencies of Battersea, Tooting and Putney. Putney was a marginal constituency until 1979 when it went Conservative. Tooting is traditionally Labour and remains so, while Battersea was one of the four constituencies in the country to fall to the Tories in the last election, when John Bows outed Alf Dubs with a majority of 857.

With its borders on the river, its pretty park and its proximity to Chelsea (indeed many estate agents refer to it as South Chelsea), Battersea had been rising high in the gentrification stakes—a fact which Wandsworth Borough Council took full advantage of in its implementation of Conservative housing policy. Council tenants were encouraged to exercise their right to buy, with offers of discounts surpassing those of any other London borough. They accepted at the rate of 250 a week. Where tenants demurred, but their property was thought desirable, Wandsworth transferred households to other areas of the borough and sold stock on the open market. 11,000 homes, one quarter of its total housing stock, have been sold off by Wandsworth, compared with 1,900 in neighbouring Lambeth.

The Housing Bill at present before Parliament will further strengthen the hand of privatisation—"doing on a legislative basis what Wandsworth has been doing for the last 10 years," says Alf Dubs. He draws a comparison with the housing situation in Chicago, where only five per cent of property is public housing, and "all the disadvantaged have to live in the same place, creating the greatest sink of all. You sentence to hell all those who can't make it. Effectively, it will be the end of public-sector housing in this country."

The Bill proposes that housing associations and property developers be allowed to tender for the ownership of council property. The tenants will then be invited to vote on the proposals; in the words of the Government, they will have the right to choose their own landlord. However, any objections will be counted in favour of the tender and a majority decision is final: 51 per cent of an estate would have to register a vote against a developer's proposal in order for the estate to stay under its existing landlord, the council. The Government has suggested that under such management the properties will be suitably improved, but it is possible that homes will gradually be sold off.



Once a month custom car enthusiasts gather on Albert Bridge for the Chelsea Cruise, top left; the Regalian property developers have taken the Livingstone estate out of the range of the original council tenants and turned it into the Falcons luxury apartments, top; For Sale signs have become an accepted part of the street furniture, above, and even the power station is to be given a new lease of life, left

Property developers like Regalian are certainly geared for the changes. Regalian Urban Renewal has been set up to deal exclusively with local authorities which have buildings "surplus to requirements".

Paul Beresford, the energetic 42-year-old leader of Wandsworth council, says that by such measures as reducing squatters' rights, the Bill will increase the availability of privately rented accommodation. Yet the Government has suggested no way of controlling privately charged rents and there are fears of a new wave of Rackmanism.

Wandsworth, meanwhile, claims to be an

efficient council. It has used money from selling off council property to upgrade what remains, repairs are carried out quickly, and there is even a 24-hour "graffiti hot line" service. It talks of "designing out crime". Indeed, the work of a special street-crime squad set up by Battersea police has helped cut down muggings by 60 per cent so far this year.

"We've created a more attractive environment, a safer environment, and more home ownership," Beresford says proudly. He is especially concerned with how things look. Wrinkling his nose in disgust, he talks of the litter-strewn, pot-holed horrors of neighbouring Lambeth and Southwark, and shows slides depicting the metamorphosis of Battersea's mean streets into verdant avenues.

Perhaps its most striking new symbol is the Marcopolo building on Chelsea Bridge Road, designed by Ian Pollard of Flaxyard. It is rumoured that the Marcopolo received its name because only the most intrepid explorers would be prepared to site their businesses south of the river, but firms are now prepared to pay dearly for the privilege. *The Observer* acquired its lease for £17 per square foot a few months ago. The latest newcomer, British Satellite Broadcasting, is paying £27. The new residents are being called "S'onlies"—as in, "5 only five minutes from Peter Jones". In Battersea High Street the old and new population may be found in two pubs within 25 yards of each other: The Woodman and The Original Woodman. In the former, discussion among the predominantly young clientele betrays a fascination with high finance.

"Did you know," brayed one drinker within my hearing, "that Andrew was dealing for Neidle on the Rowntree bid?" Another: "Don't you think the barman looks like Michael Douglas in *Wall Street*? I think it's the dimple." There are even framed cheques and bond certificates on the walls.

The Original Woodman has yellow-stained walls and a large picture of a man with a champion, Eric Bristow. A bus conductress, still





Renovation as well as new building has increased the desirability of the area



The Glassmill, a stark contrast to the neo-classicism of the Marcopolo

in uniform, sips her drink. Ronnie Simmons, dealer in antique doors and fireplaces, a Battersea resident for all his 45 years, inveighs against the yuppie influx. "The thing that annoys me most is they say they've come here for the character, when all they want to do is change it." He is offended by customers who "drive up in their GTis and beckon me over, rather than get out and come into the shop", and talks wonderingly of a young neighbour who has recently employed a black maid to "do" for his one-bedroom flat.

Even greater amusement, however, is afforded by the thought of Battersea power station becoming "The Battersea"—a "palace of entertainment", in the words of its developer, John Broome, the man who turned Alton Towers in Staffordshire into Britain's only world-rated theme park. "What London needs is fun," Broome solemnly told me, the creation of which is costing him £200 million, none of it public money. The Prime Minister expressed her delight by launching the project from the roof of the power station. "I set the scene, and then it's up to you boys to do the job," she informed Broome and Beresford.

**T**he publicity material makes The Battersea resemble a cross between the Hanging Gardens of Babylon and a duty-free shop. Broome, 44, may not like the second analogy but he will love the first because he does, indeed, plan something akin to one of the greatest wonders of the world. The power station and its grounds encompass 31 acres, on which he intends to build London's largest ice-rink, a huge travelator to transport visitors through "shark-infested waters", and a simulated "Tardis" flight through London's history. Inside will be five levels, each themed to a continent, with restaurants, up-market retailers and an 800-seat theatre. One area, described as "the garden of earthly delights", will feature "white-knuckle" rides.

Mr Broome, whose poetic phrases these are, is possessed of a vaulting ambition—ambition beyond his reach, some might say. But his flights of fancy have a material basis. Dismissing local police doubts about traffic congestion, he maintains that most of his four million visitors a year will arrive by his private "bullet train" from Victoria, which will itself incor-

porate a number of "computer experiences" during the seven-minute journey. He is bullish to the point of declaring that The Battersea will open on May 21, 1990, at 2.30 pm "precisely".

Among those who welcome Broome's initiative is Australian Rick Hawley, the head of Skillion property developers and another of Mrs Thatcher's "boys" in Battersea. "The Observer put Battersea on the map nationally. The Battersea will make it known internationally," says Hawley from his new headquarters, Glassmill, near Battersea Bridge. This building is a striking addition to the area's architectural variety and a shade more interesting than Morgan's Walk, the prestigious riverside development on the opposite side of

It is called the  
Marcopolo building  
because only the  
most intrepid explorers  
would site their  
businesses so far south

the road, otherwise known as "Yuppie Brookside".

Rick Hawley invested in Battersea 10 years ago. He began dividing up warehouse space and offering units to small businesses. His confidence has been amply rewarded, and operations have spread from the South Bank Business Centre in Battersea Park Road to premises in Greenwich and Vauxhall, as well as to other large cities. He has also taken over projects from the London Residuary Body and is turning them to profitable use. With Glassmill, Hawley is able to exploit the demand for office space in Battersea from companies who need high-profile accommodation but are finding City prices too high.

There is one local custom which has survived all developments, however. The traditional high-street traders may have all but disappeared, replaced by estate agents and designer shops, yet on the last Saturday of every month the "Chelsea Cruise" still takes place. Hot-rod and custom-car enthusiasts from all over the

country gather on Chelsea and Albert Bridges, and line both sides of the Embankment, to watch up to 1,000 of the best of British mean machines drive past in slow convoy. It is an exhibition best described as the mechanised equivalent of the John Travolta strut.

**H**ere are paraded every kind of customised vehicle, from American pick-ups on wheels so huge the passengers need a stepladder, to original Volkswagen beetles of the sort Eva Braun might have used to do her shopping. But it is the Ford Populars, or "Pops", that get the most applause from the spectators standing six deep on the pavement outside the Prince Albert pub.

The Chelsea Cruise may annoy some of the inhabitants of Prince of Wales Drive (two-bedroom flat overlooking Battersea Park: £170,000) but it is always friendly and, as one police constable on duty said to me, "most of the residents go away at weekends anyway".

For those with money to spend, Battersea can offer a convenient and agreeable lifestyle. As developers moved in so, too, did a service sector of wine bars, fabric shops and party-planners. The place is full of restaurants—some of them top-quality, like L'Arlequin—and there is plenty of theatre (the Battersea Arts Centre and the Latchmere, as well as occasional treats in the park like the Bolshoi Ballet). On somewhat elevated financial terms, Battersea is still a good buy compared with Chelsea. A new three-bedroom house in a sought-after area was recently on offer at £210,000. North of the river the price would be £350,000.

However, Parke Securities are confident that Battersea's profile will continue to rise, and house prices with it. They recently paid a record £50 million for a riverside site near The Battersea (equivalent to more than £6 million per acre), where they plan a development similar to Chelsea Harbour. It remains to be seen whether homes there will be able to command the sort of figures achieved at Chelsea Harbour, where some four-bedroom apartments realised over £1,000,000.

Prices like that, for properties which lack good public transport links, in one of the capital's least glossy spots, prove one thing: wealthy London is spreading outwards. The rest of us will be in Dartford soon ●

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# KOREA, LAND OF THE OLYMPICS

Notwithstanding the recent electoral turmoil in South Korea, visitors to Seoul for the Olympic Games in September will find calm beauty and great friendliness in this little-known country, situated on the eastern margin of the Asian land-mass. They will also discover a distinctive culture which has resisted the pervasive influence of nearby China, although their histories are interwoven.

Korea used Chinese script until the invention in the early 15th century of the *hangul* native system of writing, which uses only 24 letters and is one of the world's most scientifically-designed scripts. Its inventors based the shapes of consonants on the positions of the vocal cords during their pronunciation. Other features of Chinese culture, such as Confucianism, were adopted early in Korea and transmitted, along with writing and Buddhism, to Japan. Confucianism has exerted a profound influence on Korean family life and politics, and some great neo-Confucian thinkers came from Korea in the 15th and 16th centuries.

The Koreans have always been great merchants. During the ninth century, in particular, they controlled trade and shipping with China and Japan, and the Japanese monk Ennin writes of Koreans acting as interpreters in China; indeed, Buddhist monks from Korea travelled as far as India. Trade with Iran and the Mediterranean countries is also evident from glass objects found in ancient tombs from the Silla period (578c-AD 668) which are otherwise rich in spectacular gold artifacts not found elsewhere in East Asia.

Behind Seoul's capture of the Olympics lies a fierce national will. The energy expended in trade and industry demonstrates the Koreans' determination to make their mark in the modern world after decades of foreign interference. Between 1910 and 1945 Japan annexed the country; and the political divisions, north and south, imposed on Korea by the Great Powers after 1945 led inevitably to the Korean War in the 1950s. It is this frustration with partition which finds periodic expression in student unrest. Since 1961 successive military generals have been President and the modernisation policies of the late President Park Chong-hee stimulated the production of steel, shipping and automobiles, and made Korea a world-force in electronics. Now the incumbent, Roh Tae Woo, has offered to open trade with the North.

The Korean people, whether in countryside or city, enjoy a robust common sense and generous spirit, and the land is beautiful, with clear rivers and forested mountains beyond the rice fields, and secluded monasteries hidden deep in the valleys. It is the living features of enduring traditions which Roland and Sabrina Michaud's photographs so wonderfully enshrine.

RODERICK WHITFIELD



Above: Three scholars in a detail from a traditional painting on silk. Left: Ch'onghak dong (Village of the Blue Crane).

Here, in one of the few villages still keeping to the old customs, gentlemen on a spring outing to the hills wear the same traditional wide-brimmed hats of woven horsehair, known as *gat*, which are elegant and cool in Korea's hot summers. Reciting poetry during mountain climbs is a popular pastime





Above: In winter, metal, rather than ceramic, bowls are used for food. Rice and vegetables are dispensed by the boy at the right, who has also brought wine in white porcelain bowls. Right: Roadside tavern, by Tanwon Kim Hong-do (1745-after 1816), the master of *genre*-painting with a sympathetic eye for everyday life. Here, a young mother with her child and the pipe-smoking grandmother serve a traveller, who is eagerly tipping the last ladleful from the bowl.



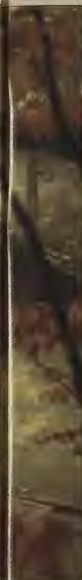
Above: Grandmother moistens the end of the string to tie the boy's balloon to a stick. Even today grandmothers and young mothers carry small children in this fashion, using a blanket and sash to make them secure. Left: Young woman carrying a baby, a detail from a 19th-century screen painting. The long plait shows her to be unmarried. The little boy she is carrying on her back is probably her brother.



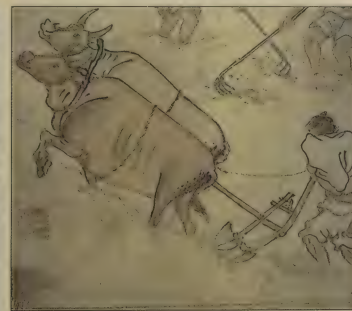




Top: Pavilion in the Secret Garden, Changdok Palace, Seoul, open at the front to overlook a secluded pond, provides a calm retreat for autumn contemplation. Above: This folk painting shows the hall where the tablets of the ancestors are kept. Evergreen pine and bamboo stand on either side. Such paintings were made for those who did not have their own family shrine to give them a means of presenting offerings and respect to their ancestors.



Above: Portrait of Sokji Ch'ae Ryong-shin (1848–1941) at the age of 80. Portraits such as this one, showing the white robes of the Confucian scholar, are among the most evocative of Korean paintings. Sokji was himself an official painter of the Painting Bureau, and served as a minor provincial official. Here he wears the traditional *chongjagwan* (scholar's hat), woven, like the *kat*, of black horsehair. Left: Kim Tu-mun, palmist from Yong'in folk village, near Suwon, south of Seoul. Kim is seated on the wooden floor of the verandah; behind are screen doors, covered with hand-made Korean paper.



Above: Ploughing, by Tanwon Kim Hong-do (detail of album leaf, ink and colours on paper). Demonstrating a touch of humour, the steep angle reflects the mountainous nature of much of Korea's arable terrain. Tanwon was also a landscape painter. Left: Ploughing rice fields in the Chiri Mountains, Cholla Province. Tiny strips of rice paddy, carved out of the banks of the rushing stream with its typically smooth, grey-granite boulders, are still best ploughed by oxen.



# MIDSUMMER DREAM

Matthew Fort waxes lyrical about a notable feast

Prophets have a pretty thin time of it. Last month I went on record as forecasting an absolute crackerjack of a summer, all sunshine and hay fever. Peering out through the drizzle now cloaking the rolling acres, I am finding it increasingly difficult to maintain my cheerful optimism, and the slaying of the prophets of Baal, who came second in a prophecy competition with Isaiah, keeps coming to mind.

A damp August makes hell seem like light relief. The children are at home and under foot 24 hours a day. Cricket matches are cancelled and tempers spoiled. It becomes impossible to mow the lawn, and therefore impossible to play a game of therapeutically murderous croquet. The slugs conduct a blitzkrieg on lettuce beds and courgette flowers.

But it may yet turn out as it should. Do you not remember that day last year when the perfume of the Madame Alfred Carrière and Gloire de Dijon roses drifted across the lawn? Can you not still

hear the murmuring of innumerable bees in the lime trees, and see the shadows lengthen across the lawn? And before we get too relaxed—not another glass of Taittinger Blanc de Blancs, my dear fellow! Oh well, if you must.

Yes, before we forget, what was it we ate at that memorable lunch? I can remember the first little treat. There were thimbles of foie gras with a raisin macerated in armagnac, or so he told us. And an asparagus tip in a filo pastry case with a dab of hollandaise sauce. Actually, I would have said that it was all rather over the top if it had not been for the Wachenheimer Mandelgarten Scheurebe Auslese 1983. Bottled sunshine. Very mellowing, that.

And then came—no, don't prompt me—that odd cold soup. Sort of sour cream with things in it. Polish, he said it was. Typical. Chlodnik or some such name, made from buttermilk and smetana and hard-boiled eggs, cucumber, radishes, tomato and a beetroot, all chopped up and some

dill added. The beetroot turned it a sort of Dayglo pink, but that sourish flavour was rather refreshing on a hot day, and you felt it was terribly good for you. There was nothing to drink with it, which was rather odd.

And then we had the sea trout. Yes, the sea trout, caught by his own rod, so he claimed. Well, that

## Not another glass of Taittinger Blanc de Blancs

was the whole excuse for the party. Not that I believe a word of it, myself. Still, it was a magnificent fish, no question about that, and absolutely fresh. I mean it was still in rigor, stiff as a poker, before he steamed it, and they don't come much fresher than that. Steamed, which seemed a bit odd at the time, and I remember Marjorie said

so—but then Marjorie would. She always knows best. Steamed, and with that sauce.

Sauce is scarcely the word for such a creation. I watched him make it. First of all he softened one red and one green tomato in butter with some finely-chopped shallots, added about  $\frac{1}{4}$  pint of champagne which he boiled away to a couple of tablespoonfuls. Then he poured in  $\frac{1}{2}$  pint of trout stock and reduced that to the same amount. Then he passed the whole lot through a sieve and added  $\frac{1}{4}$  pint hollandaise sauce. Finally he added  $\frac{1}{4}$  pint whipped cream just before serving. And the whole lot vanished in about two minutes 30 seconds. In fact it would have gone a bit faster than that if we had not lingered over the Chassagne-Montrachet 1983. Ah, me.

And then we came a bit down-market, if memory serves me right, with a saddle of lamb—a short saddle, as it is known technically. Oh yes, they lop off the back, the chump chop and kidney end. It makes a rather better joint if you ask me, particularly if you are into one of these multi-course efforts. I have learned not to overdose on any one dish when eating at his house.

So there we were, the saddle of lamb all crisply roasted. I should guess it was in for 10 minutes at a

# WILTING AT WILTONS

Jermyn Street's most traditional restaurant leaves Kingsley Amis unimpressed

The court suburb known as St James's was the creation of Henry Jermyn, a wealthy favourite of Charles II. Wiltons has been in the area since not quite so long ago, stopping over for a time in Bury Street, which Jermyn named after his country seat at Bury St Edmunds, before moving round the corner in the early 1980s to Jermyn Street itself. A short historical preamble is in order for a restaurant that, as much as any in London, gives the feeling that time has come to a stop, not as far back as the Restoration, perhaps more like 1914. (Just now and again, when forking in the spinach for instance, you may feel that time could afford to march on.)

If you want a drink before going

to the table, as I so often find I do, you sit quite comfortably in the passage and admire the great silver ice-buckets along the marble-topped bar and the abundance of prints, cartoons, posters and photographs that evoke Edwardian Paris and a London of assorted dates. My evening session was greatly bucked up by a complimentary plate of quails' eggs in their shells and langoustine tails, delicious, nicely served, but a rather hefty titbit for some appetites.

More of the same décor pervades the dining-room, which is of a pleasingly odd shape that provides lots of corners, so that every table is a little bit cut off from its neighbours. You have very much



General manager Robin Gundry and head oysterman Patrick Flaherty

not come here to see or be seen. At one time, in its Bury Street days, Wiltons was a haunt of minor literary celebrities taking expensive lunches off their publishers, but the only person I saw who could remotely be included in that category was the editor of a national newspaper, fitting his enormous frame into a booth with practised skill. In general the

clientele is male, expensively suited, drawn I should guess from the upper-middle levels of commerce and banking and not set on a wild debauch, but interested in food.

The food here is appropriately old-fashioned, i.e. designed to appeal to the customer's interior rather than to impress visiting chefs and restaurant correspondents, or look good in photo-

DAVE HOGAN



JOSEPH SHARPLES



very high temperature, Gas Mark 8 or 450°F, and then turned down to Mark 4, 350°F for 15 to 20 minutes. And then the meat was rested while he made the sauce. I am only guessing about the meat, mark you, but I know about the sauce, because he told Beryl, and Beryl told me. Apparently it is something he adapted from a recipe of Fredy Girardet. Do you

know Fredy? No, neither do I, but they do have some weird friends.

Anyway, you deglaze the roasting-pan with armagnac, scraping up all the juices and brown bits and herbs and the couple of unpeeled cloves of garlic that you had put in with the meat. Then add about  $\frac{1}{4}$  pint of veal stock and stir them all together. Strain the liquid into a saucepan,

taking particular care to squeeze out the cooked garlic cloves, add a couple of tablespoonfuls of mustard and, finally, some mustard seeds. Now all you have to do is to lift the fillets off the bone of the saddle, and slice them crossways into as many pieces as you need. A few new potatoes, a carrot or two just digged i' the kitchen garden, those cheerful mini-courgettes,

and the rest is easy. It wasn't lamb like my mother used to cook, and thank heavens for that.

And to drink? Golly. How could I forget? That was the fresh and fruity Dolcetto d'Alba 1986 of Mascarello. Quite delicious. Quite delicious. The name rolled off the tongue by then.

**C**heese, of course. Here I shall need a little help. Cheese is not my strong point, though I distinctly recall some Lancashire with a rare nip to it. Made the roof of my mouth pucker. And you are quite right, the creamy Bonchester, and something blue from Ireland of all places. Cashel Blue, that's it.

I have no problems with the pudding. Some filo pastry tarts with a hint of calvados about them—quite possibly he painted a little along with the melted butter between the leaves of pastry before baking them—filled with unpasteurised Jersey cream and raspberries. A good pudding if you are in a hurry, I should say. A good pudding by any standard, in fact. Oh, and a glass of the Taittinger Blanc de Blancs 1981. That is what reminded me. Another glass? Oh, how kind of you. The perfect host ●

*Matthew Fort is co-author of the Peter Fort column for the Financial Times*

graphs in colour magazines. You get oysters in season, scallops, crab, lobster, sole, plaice, grouse, guinea-fowl, steak, lamb cutlets and the rest, all resolutely unmucked about with. Three cheers. Unfortunately the performance as I found it is not quite up to the promise.

**S**o then: the langoustine cocktail was good, the asparagus was perfectly all right without being exactly succulent, the turtle soup was just like turtle soup but not quite piping hot and lacking that little chunk of greenish jelly-like stuff I like to see floating about in it, the pâté was frankly rather poor, high on bulk, low on flavour. Main courses followed a similar pattern: an expertly poached turbot with a fine sharp sauce, a passable but not very thrilling mixed grill, a ditto plate of liver and bacon with marginally chewy liver and limp bacon. The marinated salmon turned out to be either gravad lax or its close relative; anyway it was oily and boring enough to be doggy-bag material after a few mouthfuls. The vegetables, which are always a weak point of "traditional" restaurants,

were thoroughly humdrum.

Things took a turn for the better in the closing stages with a quite transcendent summer pudding, really saturated with juice, so good it made me think I had never had a proper one before, and an excellent cream caramel. But then, again, the raspberries were too tasteless and dry to have been worth putting on the menu, and the Stilton was no better than good. A Stilton ought to be one of the great glories of a place like this.

Nor, I am afraid, can I work up much enthusiasm for the wine-list. It leans heavily on white burgundies, which is justifiable in what is or was something of a fish restaurant. But there are those who are not keen on white burgundies. A character in a novel of mine, admittedly rather a surly fellow, likened an average one to a "blend of cold chalk soup and alum cordial with an additive or two to bring it to the colour of children's pee," and without going as far as that myself I look elsewhere when I can, and not to the Loire either. I compromised on a Gewürtztraminer, brilliant value at £17, but not altogether my idea of a "fishy" wine.

The service at Wiltons is a wee bit problematical. There is a great deal of it, from various waiters and from institutional-looking waitresses in white overalls—so much of it, in fact, that you tend to lose track of whoever it is that is supposed to be in charge of you. And some of it falls short of the leniency

a customer should be able to count on while he keeps a civil tongue in his head. All in all I think Wiltons should try harder ●

*Wiltons, 55 Jermyn Street, London SW1 (629 9955). Mon-Fri 12.30-2.30pm, 6.30-10.15pm; Sat 6.30-10.15pm. Lunch £60 for two; dinner £70 for two, excluding wine.*



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MASTERS OF THE ARTS 2

# RISK RUNNER

Now, more than ever, art galleries need creative directors with business flair and an eye to the future. Brian Wenham talks to Nicholas Serota as he prepares to take over at the Tate



They chose Nicholas Serota to be the new Director of the Tate Gallery from an international field. Richard Rogers, Chairman of the Trustees, trawled the art world. A French colleague asked why bother, since they had the best person down the road at the Whitechapel, and so it proved. Serota starts on September 1, but there has been no hand-over to speak of between him and Sir Alan Bowness, unlike the long,

lingering transitions at both the National Theatre and the Royal Opera House. So Serota is not yet ready to pronounce on detailed policy, or so he says. But there are priorities. "First, open the vaults; get more on view; send work out to the regions." The Tate is something of a storehouse of the unseen, particularly in its modern collection, with three pieces hidden away for every one on show.

The recent opening of the

Liverpool Tate helps a bit. Serota was there for the event, being responsible for that gallery too, as well as for the more substantial London home, although he has minor reservations about Liverpool. He would have preferred a slightly larger presence in the docks, and a slightly larger space for the gallery itself, if necessary at the expense of some of the higher standards of air-conditioning. But, with modifications, he would offer

Liverpool as a model for other parts of the United Kingdom, if someone can come up with the money for lower-cost versions.

There is little extra money either for new buildings or for straight-forward touring, so the sponsoring flesh will have to be pressed. Serota proved himself very nimble at cobbling the coppers together during his 11 years at the Whitechapel Gallery and clearly puts his back into this side of the business.



The recent announcement of a £6.5 million donation from a British businessman living in New York, to set up a fund to buy American art, will see Serota off to a good start. The new world of art needs whatever money it can get. Money, Serota reckons, follows energy. We speculate about York, for instance. Maybe Rowntree might offer a helping-hand? Or Nestlé? Or Suchard? One or other could be good for a sweetener.

Serota's chief in-house concerns are with the modern works, rather than with the historical British collection. He now rates the Tate as running third to the Modern Art museums of both New York and Paris. He thinks it should be up there alongside them, not in danger of "dropping off". Miss out on the highest international circuit, and you lose out on cultural exchange. If all this means rehousing in a specially tailored Modern Art wing, so much the better. Serota does not regard the catch-up task as by any means hopeless. He thinks everyone now agrees that New York is "slightly dead" and believes he can steal up on Paris.

Serota wants to be a discriminating buyer, building on strengths, rather than trying to cover the waterfront. "The point is not just to tell a story, but to excite people about art." He thinks this is best done through "dense clumps" of work: more people were drawn to Paris, he believes, once Paris had filled out its collection of Matisse's. Pressed, he said he would try first to build on the Tate's collections of Rothkos, Gabos and Giacomettis. His eyes will be on 2001, rather than 1991, and so he will try to buy now work of the 60s and 70s—and take his chances on earlier material.

Financial stringency is a factor here, but not the only one. The picture sometimes given of the Tate trustees gathering every couple of months to shell out £350,000 is not quite how it works. A handful of sizeable commitments can easily dent that sort of budget, and a single purchase, such as de Chirico's *The Uncertainty of the Poet*, at over £1 million can send the director scuttling for extra support. But Serota thinks that work which is both "great and good" can be acquired within the funds, although the annual allocation of £1.8 million is now less than Paris has at its disposal. He is prepared to take risks in what he and his trustees choose to buy—better put your trust in the recent than worry too much about the pre-war past.

Will the policy lead to rows? "It may; it well may," Serota says. The Tate is no stranger to rows. Carl André's bricks still rankle with some 12 years on, and Serota notes wryly that Liverpool is keen to have them. How will they match up to northern susceptibilities, I wonder? More recently there has been bother about a Bill Woodrow piece, entitled *Humpty Fucking Dumpty*. This was placed in the line of sight of the 80,000 visitors to the Beatrix Potter exhibition, which is asking for trouble. "You broadcasters," Serota said, remembering where I came from "would have had to put it out after 10pm." The Tate, getting most of its money through the public purse, is as exposed as broadcasting and, as with the BBC, Parliamentarians like to ask questions.

Serota does not expect to have much trouble, however, with Clause 29, against which he has campaigned. He fears more for those left behind at the Whitechapel, where local government has financial clout. The Tate may get caught up in the general wash of gay-bashing, but Serota will propound the importance of artistic merit. He is likely to have more trouble from another piece of hinted legislation, designed to restore to the Tate, the National Gallery and National Portrait Gallery the power to sell as well as to buy. This has already caused a fuss and been sent round the block once again for a re-think. Serota thinks the new powers would be perfectly workable, provided they were used to strengthen and freshen the collection; not used to cover ordinary year-to-year running costs. A man with an MA from the Courtauld, experience with the regional side of the Arts Council, and three years at the Oxford Museum of Modern Art—all before going to the Whitechapel—could be expected to use the "power of disposal" judiciously.

Close friends, and even rivals, rate him highly. Norman Rosenthal, Exhibitions Secretary of the Royal Academy, says of the seemingly reticent Serota that "he is not naturally the most gregarious of folk, but he believes in what he is doing. He has fire in his belly, and the art world invests a lot of hope in him." The applause is not quite universal. Serota has already come face to face with one piece of heavy artillery, in the shape of an acid editorial in a new magazine, *Modern Painters*. In it the editor, Peter Fuller, hits out at those who "exhibit an allegiance to art world 'internationalism', and promote a

tacky preference for the novel and the fashionable", and then he homes in on Serota. "Serota's record indicates that he cannot be relied upon to know what is worth promoting, let alone what is worth conserving in a growing national collection." The plea seems to be for keeping British arts monies for the British and for British artists. Serota remains unrepentant. "It's not only good for the British public to see international art, it's good for British artists too!"

Serota would like everything he displays to be seen to better advantage and reckons that "the look of the place" is one of the tests by which his stewardship should be judged. His chairman would like to play up to the emerging role of the river as a main London artery, perhaps by erecting a pier and putting on surrounding entertainments. These might soften the sense of the Tate as just somewhere you go and come away from again. Serota thinks that you

He has  
fire in his belly,  
and the  
art world invests  
a lot of  
hope in him

can overestimate the problems of isolation, but he would like to stay open longer into the evenings.

The exhibitions policy will be another test. Most shows are already set for the next couple of years, or beyond. What is Serota looking forward to? "Hockney this autumn, and then Constable in 1991," he says, with a hint of challenge in his voice. "Why the Constable?" It turns out that there has not been a major Constable show since 1976, and since then the Tate has located more that it can get its hands on, including *The Opening of Waterloo Bridge*, which it bought for £2.9 million, thanks to a formidable array of private and institutional supporters.

In general, Serota is confident about putting up attendances. They already nudge two million a year; he would like to aim at two and a half million and he thinks that the public will respond to a challenge. More turned out for Bacon than for Stubbs; attendances for both were in the 100,000 range, as was the turn-out for the

Cubists and for Abstraction. Serota's Whitechapel reputation is for pushing the frontiers, with exhibitions of the work of Howard Hodgkin, Julian Schnabel, David Bomberg and Beckmann's triptychs. It was, incidentally, the Whitechapel's Bomberg exhibition that took the fancy of Peter Fuller, turning him into a Bomberg fan.

It all comes back to money, of course, and Serota's bold plans will require nimble funding. Most of the annual running budget of the Tate—over £6 million—goes in staff costs; receipts from books and catering, plus the sponsorship, amount to less than £1 million all told. The commercial money, in effect, does not function as "extra". As Serota sees it, in this day of contained grants, commercial monies "let you do what you should be doing anyway". Fuller's critique suggested that fund-raising was now such a special need that the job of director might be split into two. Serota counters that "the place may be unmanageable, but the job is not large enough to split". In fact, his reference to unmanageability can be taken with a pinch of salt; Serota shows every sign of intending to enjoy the challenge of a wider canvas. Politics in the family helps. His mother, Baroness Serota, served in the Wilson government and also as one of the more open-minded but firm Governors of the BBC and Serota shares his mother's clear-headedness. Other family connections spread to the world of dance: his wife, Angela, is a governor of the Rambert Dance Company.

In fact his only discernible worry seems to be when to find time to meet living artists. He expects that it will be in the evenings, juggling for space in his diary with sponsors, trustees and the staff. A new Chairman of the Trustees will be wanted next January when Richard Rogers steps down. Serota hopes it will come from the ranks of present familiarised trustees; it usually does. He himself has a contract for seven years; his last three predecessors seemed to have the job more or less for life, or working life. Serota reels off their ages on retirement: 63, 64, 60. Now 42, he will still be on the right side of 50 when his first term ends. If the Tate wants to keep him thereafter, they may have to fight off international competition. Art these days, as Serota proclaims, is an international business, and he for one is unlikely to be short of offers ●



# THE RADICAL BYRON

## NON-FICTION

**The Politics of Paradise,  
A Vindication of Byron**  
by Michael Foot  
Collins, £17.50

This is a curious book. Like everything by Michael Foot it is supremely readable—hard to put down, easy to take up—and reflects as usual an uncompromising anti-Tory, anti-establishment stance, not that the two are necessarily identical. Its oddity consists in the lengthy discussion of William Hazlitt in the first 85 pages.

Hazlitt is an interesting character. His *Liber Amoris* shocked contemporaries as much as *Don Juan*. More important, he was a wonderful essayist, a brilliant critic and a superb prose writer, quoted copiously in this book. But his connection with Byron was tenuous. They never personally met. Hazlitt's particular genius for describing people's voices and demeanour could not be exercised, as it was with Wordsworth, Coleridge and Keats.

His political views were not those of Byron, insofar as one can define Byron's at all, and he wrote very critically about the poet. "He has a seat in the House of Lords, a niche in the Temple of Fame. Every-day mortals, opinions, things are not good enough for him to touch or think of... the people are not polite enough for him; the Court not sufficiently intellectual. He hates the one and despises the other." There is some truth in the criticism, but why so many pages about the critic?

The main theme is Byron's political outlook. Innumerable volumes have appeared about the most controversial literary figure of the 19th century, but not much about his politics. Personally he is a subject of perennial fascination: a great poet and biting satirist who fits into no category; one of the best letter writers in the English language; a shameless, probably incestuous, womaniser and sexual athlete; a rebel against convention; a disastrous husband; a republican and a passionate supporter of "liberty". And he was all these things when fear of the French Revolution and its possible revival had produced a claustrophobic



Portrait of Lord Byron by Thomas Phillips

clerical reaction in Europe.

He experienced in 1821 the suppression of the liberal movement in Italy, and in 1824 he plunged into the politics of Greek independence, though the upshot was by no means clear when he

"A gentleman  
scoundrel is always  
preferable  
to a vulgar one"

died later that year. Had he lived for another decade—he was only 36 at his death—he would have seen at least some of his ideals achieved: the Whig triumph of 1832; the liberation of Greece; the fall of the French Bourbons. But no doubt he would still have had plenty of subjects for invective.

Byron's private life has now been so fully investigated that the

remaining mysteries are likely to remain mysterious. And does it matter much whom he seduced or whether his sister bore him a daughter or what his relations were with the handsome youths he patronised? Michael Foot keeps clear of most of this though he does quote Byron's letter about *Don Juan*. "It may be profligate—but is it not *life*, is it not the *thing*? Could any man have written it—who has not lived in the world?—and tooled in a post-chaise? in a hackney coach? in a gondola? against a wall? in a court carriage? on a table? and under it?"

The principal concern of the author is to explain and analyse Byron's opinions and influence on public affairs. He argues that, despite the criticisms of Hazlitt, Byron was as radically minded as his critic, and that he shared Hazlitt's revolutionary views on Church and State. "Vindication", by which Foot means that Byron deserves the credit of being a convinced revolutionist, is not the word that all would use. In view of

the horrors which followed 1789 and 1917 one might argue that there is no need to vindicate somebody from the charge of being a half-hearted adherent of a creed which brought death, destruction and misery to millions.

In fact it is not clear that Byron did believe in revolution, and Mr Foot is too honest to suppress letters which do not fit his theory. Byron's reaction to the "massacre" of Peterloo does not sound very "radical"—a word he claimed not to understand. He regretted the deaths but wished that Henry Hunt of Bristol, leader of the demonstration had been cut down. "I am not democrat enough to like a tyranny of blackguards. Such fellows as Bristol Hunt are a choice of evils with Castlereagh—except that a gentleman scoundrel is always preferable to a vulgar one." He could sympathise, he said with Mirabeau and Lafayette but not with Robespierre or Marat. The reader must make up his own mind. He cannot claim that the evidence is unfairly presented.

As with Gibbon some of the best things are in the footnotes. The author quotes this passage: "High moral earnestness in belligerent abundance, absolute assurance that she knew all the ultimate answers to the riddle of the universe, and an evangelical zeal to subdue others for her convictions—these she had." He goes on: "The writer was of course describing Lady Byron—I thought for a moment he was writing of Mrs Thatcher."

—ROBERT BLAKE

## FICTION

**The Silence in the Garden**

by William Trevor  
Bodley Head, £9.95

**Black Box**

by Amos Oz  
Translated from the Hebrew by  
Nicholas de Lange  
Chatto & Windus, £11.95

**A Trace of Malice**

by Patrick Modiano  
Translated from the French by  
Anthea Bell  
Aidan Ellis, £10.95

One of the most touching but futile of human aspirations is the desire to bury the past and any guilt associated with it. What we





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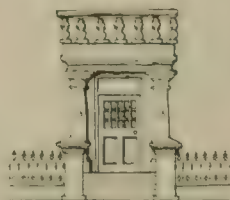
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## Books

seek to forget may haunt us in our dreams and only time can obliterate it. A fascinating aspect of William Trevor's *The Silence in the Garden*, and of his earlier stories set in Ireland, is the sense they give us of watching people in a transitional, anguished phase of their lives making this discovery for themselves.

In the wider sense the transition is that of the twilight world of the Old Ascendancy. Trevor's new novel focuses on the Rollestons who, centuries ago, had fought their way to their island home, Carriglas, in County Cork. We learn part of their story from the diary of Sarah Pollexfen, a distant cousin who, in the early years of this century, goes to Carriglas as governess to Villana Rolleston. Villana later becomes engaged to Sarah's brother Hugh, though this engagement is broken off. Colonel Rolleston is killed at Passchendaele, and when Sarah, who had already returned home, is once again at Carriglas in 1931 the house is presided over by his aging mother.

It is Sarah who recreates the idyllic world of Edwardian Carriglas with its celebrated rhododendrons, strawberry trees and croquet on the lawn. So she might see it, remembering also her love (unrequited though it was) for one of the Colonel's sons. But in 1931, with preparations for Villana's unlikely marriage to an elderly solicitor under way, the family now seem to her unable to escape from the shadows of their abandoned lives.

How they eventually perceive the past as something they can escape only in death is a story Trevor tells in his customary compassionate, tragi-comic vein, the comedy reaching a glorious climax in the scandalous events at Villana's wedding reception.

*Black Box*, by the Israeli novelist Amos Oz, is cast in the form of letters. The first one is from a woman in Jerusalem to her ex-husband now at Midwest University, Chicago. Alternately flattering and vindictive, it is essentially a begging letter in which Ilana asks Dr Alexander Gideon (Department of Political Science) for money to pay for the treatment needed by their 16-year-old wayward and violent son, Boaz.

The direct result of this request is a three-cornered fight for possession of Boaz between Alec, Ilana and her present husband, Michel, with a droll commentary provided by Alec's lawyer, Zakheim, who is dismayed by the large sums of money his client is handing

over. But throughout this absorbing study of the ambivalence of human nature we find the same voices speaking in contrasting tones of despair and optimism, of recrimination and laughter.

As after a plane crash the contents of the black box are examined, so, after their divorce, Alec and Ilana analyse by correspondence the failure of their marriage. Ilana's poisoned pen draws provocatively vivid, erotic pictures of her life with Michel and accuses Alec of trying to destroy them with his money. Mysteriously frequenting the corridors of power, Michel becomes involved "in the commandment of Redemption of the Land" with comrades from the Jewish Fellowship. He does very well for himself and gives up teaching.

Though the epistolary convention is sometimes strained by the demands Amos Oz places on it, his lyrical intensity proves an effective vehicle for steering his characters away from vindictiveness, violence and fanaticism towards reconciliation and a new faith in the future. While the political message of this clear-sighted and sympathetic Israeli writer is evident, it never obscures the emotional power of a novel that ends with Alec returning to Israel to be looked after by Ilana and the reformed Boaz.

Patrick Modiano's *A Trace of Malice* describes a man's compulsion to rediscover his past rather than to bury it. This, too, can be a tricky, if not futile, endeavour. Ambrose Guy's ostensible purpose in returning to Paris after an absence of 20 years is to meet his Japanese publisher. Perhaps he also thinks the experience will inspire him to produce something more ambitious than the thrillers for which he is famous.

Modiano's gripping but compressed narrative keeps us in some suspense as to Guy's motives. From the files of a deceased lawyer we form a shadowy picture of the wide circle of dubious acquaintances in which the young Guy moved. Among those he now seeks to trace is the girl whom he had protected from the police after she had murdered a man in self-defence—an action that compelled him to flee to England and change his name. The old "Jean Dekker" is also someone he is anxious to trace and the search for identity, and the idea of a fusion of past and present, are themes on which one would have liked to see Patrick Modiano expand.

—IAN STEWART





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## CLASSICS POLES APART

## THEATRE

By Alex Renton

In June the director-designate of the National Theatre, Richard Eyre, and the director of the Royal Shakespeare Company, Terry Hands, both opened big-budget classical productions. The urge to compare and contrast is irresistible.

Consider value for money. The National Theatre costs the consumer nearly twice as much as does the RSC, but you can see where the Government's cash has gone in Eyre's pigskin-and-walnut production of Middleton and Rowley's *The Changeling*. This classic of lust 'n' lucre revenge drama, first produced in 1621 or 22, demands and gets a set that reeks of sex and bleeds old gold.

William Dudley's design has a palace of cavernous halls, the walls thick with gilt but tarnished with greenish mould. At the back of the steep rake massive doors open on to glaring light, palms and a tropical beach. For Eyre has "transposed" the play to a 19th-century Spanish slave colony, for reasons as cosmetic as they are logical. First, Eyre can put characters into high-waisted dresses, tight white trousers and cut-away jackets. Erotic epics are hard to pull off with ruffs and galigaskins to get in the way. Then, one supposes, a society whose prosperity depends on cruelty and exploitation will be naturally more susceptible to corruption. Most important, servant parts can be played by black actors.

There's more to this than an NT attempt to fill its annual positive discrimination quota in just one show. For quite another taboo is brought into a play that is already much-exercised by murder and rape: the black ram tugging the white ewe element of *Othello*. The production's two most striking tableaux both have a frail white woman overshadowed by a black man intent on despoliation. One might question the justice, and indeed the necessity, of this radical change of emphasis if it were not for George Harris's quite brilliant major-domo, De Flores.

This lingo figure, who persuaded



Miranda Richardson in *The Changeling*, Richard Eyre's new production for the National Theatre

Beatrice-Joanna into bed as payment for murdering her unwanted fiancé, is normally played as a scrofulous lecher. But here De Flores's pustules are tribal scars; her disgust for him is based on his negritude as much as his servile status. As a result his passion becomes a noble thing, his simple sense of honour and debt far more worthy than Beatrice's girlish idea of social prerogative. Harris makes De Flores a hero: he is the only performer allowed to appeal to the audience for judgment, and he does it superbly.

Miranda Richardson as Beatrice is suitably petulant and stupid-sexy. It is not a part in which much sympathy can be roused, and the character's silliness is such that it is hard to expunge the memory of her delightfully dotty Queen Elizabeth I in Rowan Atkinson's *Blackadder*.

Perhaps the most remarkable thing in Eyre's *The Changeling* is the lack of laughs. Even the madhouse sub-plot has a coarse horror of its own: the madmen and their keepers are stupid, venal, crazed—not funny. The current fashion for dealing with revenge drama—notably the RSC's *The Revenger's Tragedy* and the National's *'Tis Pity She's A Whore*—is to give them the *Nightmare On Elm Street* treatment: grossly brutal but not without the tongue stuck a fair way into

the cheek. If Eyre can sell classic tragedy without cynicism, good luck to him.

Terry Hands's *Julius Caesar* is brief—just over two hours and no interval. Hands's principal achievement is to persuade us that this is a very bad play—an hour of prologue before the murder, followed by a sadly potted account of the military strife that leads to the assassins' defeat.

This show is handicapped by a Mark Antony (Linus Roache) with the charisma of James Dean, and no more; a Brutus (Roger Allam) who is a dull and stolid staff officer rather like Macduff. Where Eyre has twisted a setting to suit the play, Hands has hammered the play into his set: a vast brick box (by Farrah) not unlike the Barbican itself. This is sterile style-mongering.

Hands's *Caesar* provides a salutary experience for a critic: it proves that no one reads what we write. For the faults in Hands's *Caesar*—and surely his friends must have mentioned this—as seen a year ago in Stratford are the same now: a lumpish set, poor verse-speaking, inconsistent characterisation. Why give the critics the pleasure of saying "I told you so"? There's a terrible arrogance in the RSC's belief that their productions deserve a London run simply because they have been performed in Stratford ●

## SKETCHES WITHOUT INSIGHT

By Laura Cotton

Nick Ward's *The Strangeness of Others* (Cottesloe) is strange only for its banality. There is no great insight into the behaviour of everyday people and no answer suggested for the loneliness and fear which separate each of us from the other. The stereotypic characters and situations—the drug-addicted prostitute living with a violent pimp who blackmails the repressed MP who emotionally neglects his family; the loopy, muttering vagrants; and the self-obsessed children of the middle and working classes—are trite and unedifying. Yet the first two-thirds of this play are absorbing.

A dozen actors sit along the edges of the stage, watching, waiting and then performing a multitude of vignettes, cameo scenes, an interleaving of characters and events. As the director, Ward has done well to get excellent performances from a notable cast in what is an overwhelmingly



## Reviews

dismal play. Philip Voss is particularly good as a gay photographer seeking a reconciliation with his disgusted brother, the MP.

But dealing, as it does, with issues which certainly engross the typical National Theatre audience, if not the nation—loneliness, poverty, violence—this work should have provided hope, explanation, or at least detailed portraits. Instead, it is a sketch of London life, and in order to get so much into the picture Ward has had to climb to a great height, from where, inevitably, there is little clarity of vision.

At the end of the litany of moaning which passes for *angst*, a couple—Josh and Marie, would you believe?—arrive in the city only to find that there is nowhere for them and their baby to stay. The tramp (Dermot Crowley) with whom they bed down with surprising alacrity tells us we should “look to the children”.

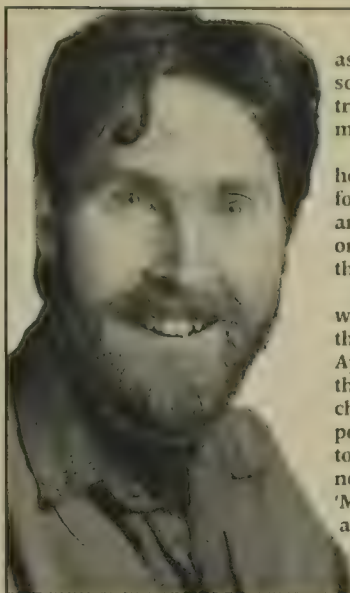
Thus is this work, despite its original formula, irrevocably placed in the realm of entertainment rather than art. One suspects that Nick Ward may have had far loftier intentions ●

to the month of August as a time to move in and test the waters—the annual Edinburgh migration might close some spaces, but it frees others.

It is, however, unusual to see a company of the stature of the RSC moving into the fringe at this time. Having streamlined their London operation into the two Barbican venues when *The Rover* finished its run at the Mermaid earlier this year, and having seen their largest of large-scale productions, *Carrie*, come to critical grief, the RSC no doubt judged it opportune to revive the kind of intimate London season they used to hold in the early 70s.

The Almeida Theatre is the venue for a nine-week season of contemporary plays which will run in repertory until October 2. The choice of theatre owes something to the Almeida's previous hosting of Not The RSC work—drama selected and staged by RSC actors, outside the official compass of the company. But Bill Alexander, the RSC artistic director who co-programmed the season, has a great deal of respect for the work the Almeida does and collaborated

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The Almeida, Islington: The RSC starts an official season this month

## BACKSTAGE

## TRILOGY FOR THE ALMEIDA

By Chris Riley

Despite the vast number of theatres dotted around London, it is still difficult for small companies to gain decent exposure in the capital. Some look

closely with the Almeida's artistic director, Pierre Audi, throughout the planning stages.

The result is the RSC's first official residency, and the plays chosen involve, as Alexander points out, “an exciting range of talents and influences”. Athol Fugard's two-hander *Hello and Goodbye*, a powerful exposé of some of the dynamics at work in the author's native South Africa, was produced by the RSC at The Place in Euston in 1973, with Fugard himself playing the role of Johnnie Smit. The new production boasts a similarly impressive lineup, with South African-born Antony Sher taking the Fugard

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Silver-gilt engraved Trefid Dessert Fork, maker's mark TD conjoined in script. London, circa 1690.  
Engraved bead-end Knife and Fork. English, circa 1695.

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## Reviews

part, Estelle Kohler playing his sister, Hester, and Janice Honeyman (associate artistic director of the Market Theatre in Johannesburg) directing. It is a project Sher and Kohler have wanted to work on for some time.

The other two plays offer a balanced, if challenging, repertory. Lucy Gannon's **Keeping Tom Nice**, for which she won the Richard Burton award in 1986, centres on a handicapped child being cared for in the family home. Developed at Stratford during a spell Gannon spent with the company, the play first came to Bill Alexander's notice on the fringe when the RSC was in Newcastle at the beginning of the year. His enthusiasm for the work has brought it to London for what will be its first fully-staged production. Ted Hughes's reworking of the **Oedipus** legend, featuring John Shrapnel, Julie Legrand and Phil Daniels, completes the make-up of the season and promises much.

Artistically it is an experiment for the RSC, but it also represents a coup for the Almeida. Rocked by massive and well-publicised cuts in their central funding from Greater London Arts, the theatre has fought back with some strong productions, notably the Maya Angelou-directed *Moon on a Rainbow Shawl*. This should complete the rehabilitation process and if some money is generated too, all the better ●

bit: the miracle still works. The "jump cuts", whereby Godard dispenses with editing formalities such as cutaways and master shots, still come like electric shocks.

Also revived from the early 60s is John Frankenheimer's masterpiece **The Manchurian Candidate**. It is a flamboyant, satirical thriller in which an American patrol, captured and brainwashed in Korea, return home with one of their number programmed to assassinate when triggered by his Communist control. It contains the best performances that Frank Sinatra, Laurence Harvey and Angela Lansbury ever delivered on screen, and George Axelrod's



Sinatra and Harvey in  
*The Manchurian Candidate*

script, adapted from the irreverent novel of Richard Condon, lards the nightmare with literate wit. A year after it was released John F. Kennedy was shot and political assassination became a sensitive area in the cinema. Sadly, Frankenheimer's film was virtually suppressed and his subsequent long career never achieved the same distinction.

Today's American films are preoccupied with babies, teenagers and dance crazes. The two latter categories are well catered for in **Shag** which has both British producers, Hemdale and Palace, and a British director, Zeldia Barron. The early 60s atmosphere of *Where the Boys Are* is carefully recreated. Four teenage girls take off after their high-school graduation for a weekend in Myrtle Beach, "the teen Mecca of the South", and each finds what she wants from her life to come. Phoebe Cates ditches her wealthy, starchy fiancé (Tyrone Power Jr) for Robert Rusler, who plays a smoothly assured achiever about to go to Yale. Bridget Fonda vamps her way to the attention of a Hollywood agent. The senator's daughter, Page Hannah, mops up the liberated

## CINEMA

### MASTERS OF THE 60s SCREEN

By George Perry

Two old films are showing up the new. When Jean-Luc Godard's **A Bout de Souffle** (*Breathless*) opened at the Academy in 1961 it was regarded as the apotheosis of the French New Wave. The partnership of Jean-Paul Belmondo and Jean Seberg as a cop-killer on the run and his American girlfriend was as chemically exciting as Bogart and Bacall, while Godard's wit and irreverence influenced scores of other film-makers.

It would have been unsurprising if something so *outré* for its time now seemed stale and tame. Not a



young Ty, and the group wall-flower, Annabeth Gish, gets to win the shag-dancing contest and finds true love with a future marine, Scott Coffey. There is not much originality in all this, but Zelda Barron overcomes the predictable narrative with a keen eye for 60s atmosphere.

The British are also prominent in another American film, which has been directed by Nicolas Roeg and written by Dennis Potter. In **Track 29** Gary Oldman turns up from nowhere, claiming to be Theresa Russell's son. It seems that as a baby he was given away for adoption at the behest of her doctor husband, Christopher Lloyd, a medical incompetent, philanderer and train freak. It is a compelling study of developing madness, and Roeg's direction maintains a consistent and appropriate sense of unease. It is his best film for years ●

George Perry is also Films Editor of The Sunday Times.

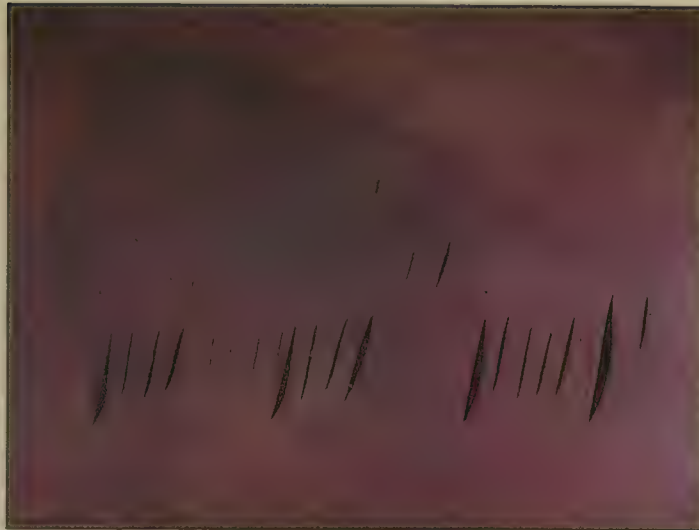
## EXHIBITIONS

### FIRST SPACE FOR FONTANA

By James Hall

When avant-garde art first emerges it is almost always equated with death and destruction. Once upon a time Impressionist landscapes were called "apocalyptic"; Picasso's friends, on seeing *Les Femmes d'Alger*, "froze with horror"; the Surrealist Georges Bataille thought that art was a matter of "successive destructions"; and the Futurists wanted to fill in the Grand Canal and turn it into a runway.

The Argentinian-born, Italian artist **Lucio Fontana** (1899-1968), is no exception to this catalogue of sound and fury. The story goes that in the late 50s, angered at having ruined a canvas, he slashed it with a knife and thereupon his art of slits and perforations was born—or rather, untimely ripped. There is, of course, a large dose of personal myth-making in this anecdote. In fact, the slashed canvases represent the climax of what had been his major concern since the 30s: the opening up of the work



Slashed canvases: Lucio Fontana's spatial concept, *Expectations* 1959

of art so that it can suggest limitless space and freedom of movement. The exploration of this idea is seen fully at the Fontana retrospective at the Whitechapel, the first major survey of his work to be shown in this country.

Fontana called his "vandalised" canvases "spatial concepts". The earliest of these are made up of constellations of small perforations. Extending his interest in the agitated play of light on a glassy surface, he sometimes scattered fragments of coloured glass over the perforated canvas. The picture surface seems to retreat and advance, a cosmic mosaic of black holes and coloured stars. Later on he made works with clusters of parallel slashes which, while they literally open up the space behind the picture, also fence it off like a densely-packed row of railings. These and his single-slash "spatial concepts" are usually compared to the galactic expanses in Jackson Pollock's work; but Matisse is surely more important? After the war Matisse made paper cut-outs, of which the Tate's *L'Escargot* is the most famous example. He described his working method, whereby scissors replaced the paintbrush, in a way that could equally apply to Fontana: "Cutting into living colour reminds me of the sculptor's direct carving."

A series from 1963, called *The End of God*, consists of oval monochrome canvases riddled with quite large and irregular holes. In typical avant-garde terms, we are being shown that God and, more importantly, Art, are dead. Yet when Fontana cuts into a painting, even more so than Matisse, he resurrects it as a new kind of three-dimensional sculpture in which the edges of the torn canvas billow and curl back into space like sails or even wings ●

## ROCK RECORDS

### NEW STAR AMID THE OLD BORES

By Roger Sabin

Over a decade ago punk bands coined the phrase "Boring Old Farts" to describe rock stars trading in the "adult-oriented" sound then swamping the charts. In protest, the spiky-tops went on the offensive: songs were kept short and to the point, and the only "credible" gig venues were intimate halls and small clubs. It was the beginning of a new era, with the energy put back into rock and roll. It was the New Wave.

The punk "revolution" never happened that way, of course. The *ancien régime* proved more durable than anybody could have imagined. Today, for example, Fleetwood Mac—archetypal BOFs—are more popular than they have ever been, and Genesis are so successful they have turned themselves into a pension fund.

There are still pockets of resistance to the prevailing mainstream, only today it is a predominantly black music phenomenon. Hip-hop is the nearest thing the 80s has to punk. The booming beat-box rhythms punctuated by rap vocals and "record scratching" is as uncompromising a sound as anything the New Wave produced. The aggressive stance of some of the bands, and the distinctive "uniform" (black 501s, black

MA1 jackets, unlaced trainers) add to the similarities. This is the rebel-rock of the moment.

Among recent LP releases are representatives from each of these categories: a slice of original punk in the form of a greatest hits double from the Ramones, a BOF who survived—Rod Stewart—and a new hip-hop star—Derek B.

**Ramones Mania** (Sire 925709.1) is a 30-track blockbuster spanning 11 years in the recorded life of "Da Brudders" Ramone. American guitar foursome and undisputed masters of the two-minute thrash. Their early material is given a disproportionate airing, with songs like "Blitzkrieg Bop" and "Teenage Lobotomy", but this collection is both a timely reminder of the initial promise of punk and a tribute to a still-great band.

Rod Stewart's album **Out of Order** (Warners 152 925684.1) is all fresh material, but, alas, sounds as dated as the pineapple-haircut that the man is modelling on the sleeve. There are signs of hope: the track "Lost in You" borrows U2's ethereal guitar-sound to produce a pop song of some sophistication.

The debut LP from Derek B, however, is a real breath of fresh air. **Bullet From a Gun** (Phonogram DRKLP 1) hits the target first time with its novel ideas. Derek B (né Boland) is a 22-year-old Londoner who clearly intends to show the American



Derek B: fresh new sounds

hip-hop élite the way the medium should be going. Instead of sampling heavy metal to flesh out the beat, a technique pioneered by Run DMC and the Beastie Boys (where are they now?), Boland uses snatches from much more poppy fare—Prince, the Jackson Five, etc. The result is one of the most listenable dance LPs to come out in a long time. The confidence of the man in carving out his own ground is remarkable. "Be original—you go further that way", he raps on "All City" ●



# The capital list

A discerning guide to entertainment in the city



Bhutan on film at Smith's Galleries



Are the fingers having surgery too? Jackson struts Wembley



Cornwall by Joseph Southall at Bankside Gallery

## THEATRE

Where applicable, a special telephone number is given for credit card bookings. The address & telephone number of each theatre are given only on the first occasion it appears in each section.

**Cat on a Hot Tin Roof.** Tennessee Williams's tale of a warring Mississippi family, with strong performances from Ian Charleson, Eric Porter & Lindsay Duncan. Lyttelton, National Theatre, South Bank, SE1 (928 2252, cc). REVIEWED APR, 1988.

**The Changeling.** 17th-century tragedy dealing with sexual obsession. Richard Eyre directs Miranda Richardson & George Harris. Lyttelton, National Theatre. REVIEW ON P64.

**Greek.** An updated *Oedipus*, with Britain replacing Thebes as the plague-ridden nation. Directed by the ever-controversial Steven Berkoff, who also stars, it is a savage indictment of the violence prevalent in so much of modern society. With Georgia Brown, Gillian Eaton & Bruce Payne. Wyndhams, Charing Cross Rd, WC2 (836 3028, cc).

**How the Other Half Loves.** Alan Ayckbourn's lightweight comedy about the turmoil caused to three couples by a one-off affair. Starring Richard Kane & Gabrielle Drake. Duke of York's, St Martin's Lane, WC2 (836 5122, cc 836 9837).

**Lettice & Lovage.** Maggie Smith leads the cast in Peter Shaffer's comedy about the relationship between two formidable women. Globe, Shaftesbury Ave, W1 (437 3667, cc 741 9999).

**The Merchant of Venice.** With Antony Sher's controversial Shylock & Deborah Findlay as Portia. Barbican, EC2 (638 8891, cc).

**A Midsummer Night's Dream.** Return of last year's highly entertaining New Shakespeare Company production, again directed by Caroline Smith. Open Air Theatre, Regent's

Park, NW1 (486 2431, cc 486 1933). **The Shaughraun.** Dion Boucicault's 1870s melodrama, set in the west of Ireland. Howard Davies directs. Stephen Rea stars as the vagabond. A great night out. Olivier, National Theatre. REVIEWED JULY, 1988.

**South Pacific.** Lively, enjoyable West End revival for one of Rodgers & Hammerstein's best musicals. With Gemma Craven, Emile Belcourt & Bertice Reading in leading roles. Prince of Wales, Coventry St, W1 (839 5987, cc 240 7200).

**The Strangeness of Others.** Nick Ward directs his new play, set in contemporary London & looking at the shifting relationships between rich & poor. Uneven & dissatisfying. Cottesloe, National Theatre. REVIEW ON P64.

**The Tempest.** One of Shakespeare's three major late plays produced by Peter Hall as part of the South Bank's End Games festival. Michael Bryant, Jennifer Hall & Tony Haygarth star. Olivier, National Theatre.

**'Tis Pity She's a Whore.** Alan Ayckbourn directs Rupert Graves & Suzan Sylvester in a revival of John Ford's 17th-century play about a corrupt & ailing society. Olivier, National Theatre. REVIEWED MAY, 1988.

**Titus Andronicus.** Deborah Warner's production stars Brian Cox in the title role & Estelle Kohler as Tamora. The Pit, Barbican.

**Too Clever by Half.** Alexander Ostrovsky's 19th-century comedy about a Russian con man, directed by Richard Jones. Old Vic, Waterloo Rd, SE1 (928 7616, cc 261 1821).

**Uncle Vanya.** A distinguished cast including Michael Gambon, Michael Bryant, Imelda Staunton & Greta Scacchi. Chekhov at its best. Not to be missed. Vaudeville, Strand, WC2 (836 9987, cc). REVIEWED JULY, 1988.

**Winnie.** Abysmal musical celebrating Churchill's wartime persona. Robert Hardy & Virginia McKenna star, the musical director is Albert Marre.

Victoria Palace, Victoria St, SW1 (834 1317, 828 4735, cc).

**The Winter's Tale.** Directed by Peter Hall. With Tim Pigott-Smith as Leontes & Sally Dexter as Hermione. Olivier, National Theatre.

**The Winter's Tale.** A New Shakespeare Company production, directed by David Gilmore with designs by Simon Higlett. Open Air Theatre.

**Ziegfeld.** Harold Fielding presents a multi-million-pound musical flop based on the life & work of the theatrical impresario Florenz Ziegfeld. Co-written by Ned Sherrin & Alistair Beaton, it is a chaotic assemblage of glittery sketches. London Palladium, Argyll St, W1 (437 7373, cc). REVIEWED JUNE, 1988.

## FIRST NIGHTS

**Bussy D'Ambois.** Jacobean tragedy by George Chapman about lust, ambition & double-dealing in the French court. Directed by Jonathan Miller. Opens Aug 18. Old Vic, Waterloo Rd, SE1 (928 7616, cc 261 1821).

**A Hard Day's Night.** Touching tale by Frederick Harrison of two Beatles-mad sisters trying to come to terms with the 80s. A Hull Truck Theatre Company production. Aug 12, 13. Purcell Room, South Bank Centre, SE1 (928 3191, cc 928 8800).

**Hyde Park.** James Shirley's Carolean comedy, updated to 1920s Bloomsbury, concerning the courtship of three young women. Directed by Barry Kyle, starring Fiona Shaw & Alex Jennings. Opens Aug 3. The Pit, Barbican, EC2 (638 8891, cc).

**Mrs Klein.** Melanie Klein (1882-1960) had one abiding passion: to bring psychoanalysis to childhood. Nicholas Wright's play examines how her battle to increase the world's store of happiness very nearly destroyed her own, & focuses in particular on the death of her son in 1934. Peter Gill directs; Gillian

Barge plays Mrs Klein. Opens Aug 10. Cottesloe, National Theatre, South Bank, SE1 (928 2252, cc).

**Three Sisters.** Major new production of Chekhov's masterpiece, directed by John Barton. In a stifling provincial town, Irina (Stella Gonet), Olga (Deborah Findlay) & Masha (Harriet Walter) yearn for the bright lights of Moscow. Opens Aug 4. Barbican.

## STAYERS

**Beyond Reasonable Doubt.** Queen's (734 1166); **Cats.** New London (405 0072); **Chess.** Prince Edward (734 8951); **Follies.** Shaftesbury (379 5399); **42nd Street.** Drury Lane (836 8108); **Kiss Me Kate.** Savoy (836 8888); **Les Liaisons Dangereuses.** Ambassador's (836 6111); **Me & My Girl.** Adelphi (836 7611); **Les Misérables.** Palace (434 0909); **The Mousetrap.** St Martin's (836 1443); **The Phantom of the Opera.** Her Majesty's (839 2244); **Run For Your Wife.** Criterion (930 3216); **A Small Family Business.** Olivier, National (928 2252); **Starlight Express.** Apollo Victoria (828 8665).

## FRINGE

**A Bright Room Called Day.** It is Germany in the early 30s & a group of intellectuals—writers, directors & actors—are faced with the question of whether to flee the country or stay & compromise. A provocative political piece from American playwright Tony Kushner. Bush, Shepherds Bush Green, W12 (743 3388).

**Downfall.** Gregory Motton's bizarre tale of chance meetings in the urban jungle. Until mid-Aug. Royal Court Upstairs, Sloane Sq, SW1 (730 2554). **Forget-me-not Lane.** Alan Strachan directs Peter Nichols's autobiographical story of growing up during the war—complete with music. Opens Aug



Not to be missed . . . Nicolas Roeg's film *Track 29*, the Tommy Smith Quintet on the South Bank & *Uncle Vanya* at the Vaudeville  
Stay clear of . . . the films *School Daze* & *It Couldn't Happen Here*, the musicals *Winnie* & *Ziegfeld*, & Pink Floyd at Wembley Stadium



Tingware: ceramic art by Peter Ting goes on show at the Endell Street Place



The master of mime, Marcel Marceau, at Sadler's Wells Theatre

18. Greenwich Theatre, Crooms Hill, SE10 (858 7755, cc 853 3800).

**Katherine.** The life of Katherine Mansfield, antipodean short-story writer, who died young in 1923. Written by Peter Moffat, presented by the Aphra Behn Theatre Company. Until Aug 13. Man in the Moon, 392 King's Rd, SW3 (351 2876).

**Much Ado About Nothing.** A Young Shakespeare Company production, with original songs set to new music. Aug 2-6. Holland Park Open Air Theatre, W8. Information from Leighton House, 12 Holland Park Rd, W14 (602 7344).

**The Recruiting Officer.** George Farquhar's story of small-town life in Shrewsbury in 1706, as two women attempt to bring their lovers to heel during an army recruiting drive. Max Stafford-Clark directs. Royal Court, Sloane Sq, SW1 (730 1745, cc).

**RSC at the Almeida season.** *Hello & Goodbye* by Athol Fugard, with Antony Sher & Estelle Kohler, directed by Janice Honeyman; *Keeping Tom Nice*, first play by Lucy Gannon, with Linus Roache, directed by Bill Buffery; *Oedipus*, adapted from Seneca by Ted Hughes, with John Shrapnel, directed by Donald Sumpter. Opens Aug 2. Almeida, Almeida St, N1 (359 4404, cc). SEE BACKSTAGE P65.

**Sophiatown.** An a cappella musical set in Johannesburg. Sophiatown was known as the "Chicago of South Africa", a place where black & white bohemians lived in harmony until, in the mid-50s, the police moved in & razed it to the ground. Until Aug 13. Hampstead Theatre, Swiss Cottage Centre, NW3 (722 9224).

**To Kill a Mockingbird.** The classic anti-racist courtroom drama concerning a black farmhand accused of the rape of a young white girl in Alabama in 1935. Directed by Kenneth Alan Taylor, in conjunction with Nottingham Playhouse. Until Aug 13. Greenwich Theatre.

## CINEMA

The following films are expected to be showing in London or on general release at some time during the month. Programmes often change at short notice. Consult a local or daily newspaper for exact location & times.

**A Bout de Souffle** (15). Re-release of Jean-Luc Godard's romantic thriller, with Jean-Paul Belmondo as a gangster on the run from the police & Jean Seberg as the woman with whom he falls in love. Opens July 22. Everyman, Hollybush Vale, NW3 (435 1525). REVIEW ON P66.

**Beetlejuice** (15). Lightweight comedy-horror with Michael Keaton as a ghost employed to drive a family out of their home because they intend to decorate it in bad taste. Opens Aug 12. Warner West End, Leicester Sq, WC2 (439 0791, cc 439 1534).

**The Couch Trip** (15). Brisk, often hilarious, comedy from Michael Ritchie about prison asylum inmate Dan Aykroyd who pretends to be a psychiatrist in order to escape.

**It Couldn't Happen Here** (15). Tire-some vehicle for current teenybop idols, the Pet Shop Boys.

**The Jungle Book** (U). School holiday re-release of the 1967 Disney animated classic, loosely based on Kipling's story. Mowgli the man-cub & his jungle chums swing to a jazz-jiving soundtrack. Opens July 29.

**Long Live The Lady!** (15). Ermanno Olmi's artful dissection of bourgeois eating pretensions features a formal dinner where snooty guests struggle through frog soup followed by what looks like coelacanth. Some comical moments, but ultimately not enough. Opens July 29. Chelsea Cinema, 206 Kings Rd, SW3 (351 3742); Renoir, Brunswick Sq, WC1 (837 8402).

**A Man in Love** (18). Slow-moving story of a traumatic love affair between a married actor & his co-star, directed by

Diane Kurys. Lack of substance is made up for by beautiful Rome locations & strong performances from Peter Coyote & Greta Scacchi. Opens July 29. Cannons: Tottenham Court Rd, W1 (636 6148), Piccadilly, W1 (437 3561); Chelsea Cinema.

**The Manchurian Candidate** (15). John Frankenheimer's thriller about political assassination, made in 1962, stars Frank Sinatra, Laurence Harvey, Janet Leigh & Angela Lansbury. Withdrawn from distribution after President Kennedy was shot, it has not been seen since. Opens Aug 5. Screen on the Hill, 203 Haverstock Hill, NW3 (435 3366). REVIEW ON P66.

**School Daze** (18). Spike Lee's follow-up to *She's Gotta Have It* is a musical comedy set in an all-black college. Unfortunately the acute things it has to say about black consciousness are offset by some juvenile & often grossly sexist humour. Just another teen movie. Opens July 29. Screen on the Green, 83 Upper St, N1 (226 3520); Cannon Tottenham Court Rd.

**September** (PG). Downbeat drama from Woody Allen concerning a gathering of overwrought city-types. Everybody is in love with everybody else; identical to Allen's 1982 *Midsummer Night's Sex Comedy*, although this time there are few laughs.

**Shag** (15). Teen romp directed by Zelda Baron about four school chums who have one last party before one of their number gets married. Stars Bridget Fonda (daughter of Peter) & Phoebe Cates. Opens Aug 12. Cannons Chelsea, 279 Kings Rd, SW3 (352 5096), Oxford St, W1 (636 0310). REVIEW ON P66.

**Throw Momma From the Train** (PG). Danny DeVito's first film as director/star is a remake of Hitchcock's classic suspense thriller, *Strangers on a Train*, played as a black comedy. Also starring Billy Crystal. REVIEWED JULY, 1988.

**Track 29** (18). Nicolas Roeg directs Dennis Potter's story of the intense

relationship between a frustrated housewife (Teresa Russell) & a tall, dark stranger (Gary Oldman). Opens July 29. Lumiere, St Martin's Lane, WC2 (836 0691). REVIEW ON P67.

**Vice Versa** (PG). Undemanding adventure-caper about a businessman (Judge Reinhold) & his son (Fred Savage) who swap personalities by means of a magic oriental skull. Written by Dick Clement & Ian La Frenais, the movie is not as funny as it thinks it is. Opens July 29. Odeon, Leicester Sq, WC2 (930 6111).

**Vincent** (PG). Paul Cox's appraisal of the life of Vincent Van Gogh, told through the artist's letters (narrated by John Hurt), backed with stills from paintings & location shots of the countryside that inspired them. Opens Aug 5. Renoir.

**Wings of Desire** (15). Wim Wenders won Best Direction prize at Cannes for this tale of angels who descend to earth to observe the inhabitants of contemporary Berlin. Poetic & compassionate. REVIEWED JULY, 1988.

## EXHIBITIONS

### OPENING

#### BANKSIDE GALLERY

48 Hopton St, SE1 (928 7521).

**The Glory of Watercolour.** 130 recently conserved works from the Diploma collection of the Royal Society of Painters in Watercolours dating from the late 18th century to the present day. Artists include John Varley, Peter De Wint, Charles Knight & Jacqueline Rizvi. Aug 4-Sept 4. Tues 10am-8pm, Wed-Sat 10am-5pm, Sun 1-5pm. £1, concessions 50p.

#### BARBICAN

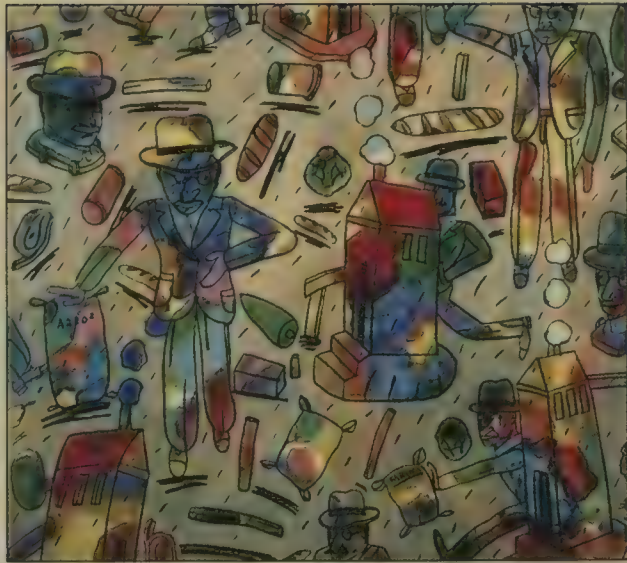
EC2 (638 4141).

**International Art Show for the End of World Hunger.** Works by Andy Warhol, Howard Hodgkin, Roy Lichtenstein & many others, brought





The ENO's *Carmen* opens the new season at the London Coliseum on August 26



Segu's *Comida para todos* in International Art at the Barbican

together to raise public awareness of Third World starvation. The show opened in Minnesota in 1987 & has been seen in Norway, Sweden, Cologne & Paris. Aug 4-Oct 2.

**L. S. Lowry.** Includes classic representations of the northern working class: "matchstick men" dwarfed by the huge industrial institutions that moulded their lives. First major London showing of Lowry's work since his death in 1976. Aug 4-Oct 2. Mon-Sat 10am-6.45pm, Sun noon-5.45pm. £3, concessions £1.50.

#### COLNAGHI

14 Old Bond St, W1 (491 7408).

**Prospects of Town & Park:** 37 landscapes, many of country houses & gardens, lent by museums & galleries from all over Britain & purchased by the National Art-Collections Fund between 1935 & 1986. Included is work by John Wilson Carmichael, Crimean war artist for the *ILN*. Until Aug 20. Mon-Fri 10am-6pm, Sat 10am-1pm.

#### ENDELL STREET PLACE

27-29 Endell St, WC2 (240 1069).

**Contemporary Stained Glass.** Featuring the work of Nicola Kantorowicz & Susan Derbyshire. Windows can be ordered to individual specifications. July 25-Aug 8.

**Tingware.** Art on a clay canvas—colourful, original tableware in a class of its own, by Peter Ting. The Hong Kong-born artist will undertake commissions to suit clients' particular tastes in home décor. Aug 15-29. Mon-Sat 10am-6pm.

#### SMITH'S GALLERIES

33A Shelton St, WC2 (836 6252).

**Bhutan: Land of the Thunder Dragon.** Photographs of the Himalayan kingdom of Bhutan by Tom Owen Edmunds who travelled around as a guest of the Bhutanese royal family. The country retains its medieval customs & included here are magical pictures of Buddhist festivals, castle monasteries & nomadic yak herds. Aug 22-Sept 3. Mon-Sat 11am-7pm.

## STILL SHOWING

#### HAYWARD GALLERY

South Bank, SE1 (928 3144).

**Angry Penguins: Realist Painting in Melbourne in the Forties.** Early paintings by Sidney Nolan save this exhibition from disappearing up its

own thesis. Hard to recommend a special visit. Until Aug 14. REVIEWED JULY, 1988.

**Impressions & the Modern Vision: Master Paintings from the Phillips Collection.** From Old Masters through Impressionism to more modern work from the private Phillips Collection. Renoir, El Greco, Cézanne & Monet are among those represented. Highly recommended. Until Aug 21. REVIEWED JULY, 1988.

Mon-Wed 10am-8pm, Thurs-Sat until 6pm. £3, concessions & everybody all day Mon & after 6pm Tues & Wed £1.50.

#### NATIONAL GALLERY

Trafalgar Sq, WC2 (839 3321).

**French Painting from the USSR: Watteau to Matisse.** First major exhibition of French paintings from the USSR: nearly 40 works from the Hermitage & Pushkin museums. Until Sept 18. Mon-Sat 10am-6pm, Sun 2-6pm.

#### PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE

Chancery Lane, WC2 (878 3666).

**Historical Documents from the National Archives.** Everything from the original Domesday Book to Rab Butler's drafts on the back of envelopes of his 1944 Education Act. Permanent display (documents change every six months approx). Mon-Fri 10am-5pm.

#### TATE GALLERY

Millbank, SW1 (821 1313).

**Late Picasso.** An intriguing selection of Picasso's work: paintings, sculptures & drawings. Until Sept 18. Mon-Sat 10am-5.50pm, Sun 2-5.50pm. £3, concessions £1.50. REVIEWED JUNE, 1988.

#### VICTORIA & ALBERT MUSEUM

Cromwell Rd, SW7 (938 8500).

**Textiles of the Arts & Crafts Movement.** Printed & woven fabrics representing designers such as William Morris, Walter Crane & Lewis F. Day. Until Sept 4. Mon-Sat 10am-5.50pm, Sun 2.30-5.50pm. Voluntary donation, suggested £2, concessions 50p.

#### WHITECHAPEL ART GALLERY

Whitechapel High St, E1 (377 0107).

**Lucio Fontana Retrospective.** The first comprehensive survey of Fontana's work to be shown in this country will include the large slit-canvas of the 50s & 60s that earned him his reputation as a leading innovator in post-war European art. Until Sept 18. Tues-Sun 11am-5pm, Wed until 8pm. REVIEW ON P67.

## AFTER DARK

Please phone to confirm details.

**Aardvark Club.** New Wave comedians toil to keep us amused (but then, aardvark never hurt anybody). Fridays. The George, 57 Liverpool Rd, N1 (info: 441 6000).

**Hippodrome.** Bright lights, loud funk & pricey drinks for a dressed-up crowd of real-life "Loadsamoneys". Leicester Sq, WC2 (437 4311).

**New Performance.** Ambitious mix of cabaret, theatre, performance art & music that can be magic when it gels. Wednesdays. Rosemary Branch Theatre Club, 2 Shepperton Rd, N1 (359 3204).

**Shock Treatment.** A DJ called Lizard spins the best in gothic-punk. Upstairs at the Harp Club, Clifton Rise, New Cross, SE14 (info: 326 0969).

**Storm Club.** Excellent new jazz club that is already attracting the best bands on the live circuit (Clarke Tracey, Alan Skidmore, etc). Rated DJs keep things going between the sets. Thursdays. Upstairs at Drummonds, 73-77 Euston Rd, NW1 (387 4566).

**Troubadour Poets.** One of London's few regular poetry venues. Mondays. Troubadour Coffee House (downstairs), 265 Old Brompton Rd, SW5 (874 8218).

**Zeeta's.** Commercial dance sounds at this friendly Putney local. 200A Upper Richmond Rd, SW15 (785 2101).

## JAZZ

**Tommy Chase Band.** The legendary skinhead skin-beater keeps his young hard-bop outfit in line. Aug 5. 100 Club, 100 Oxford St, W1 (636 0933).

**El-Dorado Jazzband.** Founder Rudi Jones leads this top Guyanese combo through a heady mix of modern jazz & ethnic rhythms. Aug 21, noon-2.30pm. Terrace Foyer, Barbican, EC2 (638 8891, cc).

**Loose Tubes.** Young British big-band, with their eclectic fusion of bebop, swing & South African township music, here capitalising on a triumphant stint at Ronnie Scott's. Fast gaining a reputation as one of the hottest live acts around. Aug 4. Barbican.

**Rod Mason Hot 5.** Stomping trad sounds, inspired by Louis Armstrong. Aug 24. 100 Club.

**Jim Mullen Quartet.** Quality jazz-funk from guitarist Mullen ("the demon picker"), with Pete Jacobsen (keyboards), Trevor Barry (bass) & Neil Watkinson (drums). Aug 11. Bass Clef, 85 Coronet St, N1 (729 2440).

**Arturo Sandoval.** Veteran Cuban trumpeter, ex-Dizzy Gillespie front-man, shows the young how it's done. July 25-Aug 20. Ronnie Scott's, 47 Friar St, W1 (439 0747).

**Tommy Smith Quintet.** Gifted 21-year-old Brit free-style jazzier, equally at home on tenor sax & flute. Spends much of his time in the US, so catch him while you can. Aug 20. Purcell Room, South Bank Centre, SE1 (928 3191, cc 928 8800).

**Clarke Tracey Quintet.** More hard-bop led from the drum-stool, this time of a much more subtle variety. Aug 17, Purcell Room, South Bank Centre.

## ROCK

**The Boogie Brothers.** Anthemic rhythm & blues from the Blues Brothers' Brit imitators. Aug 19. 100 Club, 100 Oxford St, W1 (636 0933).

**Cambridge Folk Festival.** A more interesting bill than usual this year, including Christy Moore, Tom Robinson & Nick Lowe. Worth digging out that Fair Isle jumper & making the trip up the M11. July 29-31. Cherry Hinton Hall grounds, Cherry Hinton, Cambridge (0223 463377, cc).

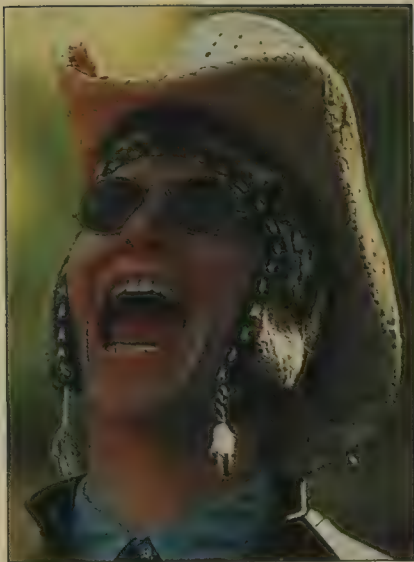
**Michael Jackson.** The human sculpture struts his stuff. Aug 26, 27. Wembley Stadium, Middx (902 1234, cc 741 8989).

**The Pastels/Biff Bang Pow.** Double bill of "shambling" guitar-thrash from the Creation Records stable. Indie pop at its best. Aug 15. Dingwalls, Camden Lock, Chalk Farm Rd, NW1 (267 4967).

**Pink Floyd.** Psychedelic hippies turned techno-rockers make a comeback with their massive laser show. Aug 5, 6. Wembley Stadium.

**10,000 Maniacs.** Far from maniacal folk-rock from the John Peel raves. Fast losing their cult status, so book early. Aug 1. Town & Country, 9-17 Highgate Rd, NW5 (267 3334).





An unloved son, Gary Oldman, in *Track 29*



China's Shenyang circus comes to the South Bank



Randy Crawford opens the Barbican's Summer Pops

## CLASSICS

### ALBERT HALL

Kensington Gore, SW7 (589 8212/9465, cc 379 4444).

**Henry Wood Promenade Concerts.** Nightly until Sept 17.

**BBC Symphony Orchestra.** Lothar Zagrosek conducts the world première of Michael Finnissy's *Red Earth*, & works by Schoenberg, Debussy & Scriabin. Aug 2, 7.30pm.

**London Handel Choir & Orchestra** perform *L'Allegro, il Penseroso ed il Moderato* by Handel. Aug 4, 7.30pm.

**Lyons Opera Orchestra, Monteverdi Choir.** John Eliot Gardiner conducts a semi-staged performance of Debussy's opera *Pelléas et Mélisande*, with works by Bizet, Ravel & Berlioz. Aug 8, 7pm.

**BBC Symphony Orchestra.** On the same theme, Matthias Bamert conducts Schoenberg's *Pelleas und Melisande*, & music by Beethoven & Mozart. Aug 9, 7.30pm.

**BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra.** To conclude the Maeterlinck exploration, Jerzy Maksymiuk conducts Sibelius's *Pelléas et Mélisande*, & Thea Musgrave's Horn Concerto, with Barry Tuckerwell as soloist. Aug 10, 7.30pm.

**BBC Symphony Orchestra.** Anne-Sophie Mutter is the soloist in Lutoslawski's *Chain 2*, conducted by the composer. Aug 12, 7.30pm.

**Monteverdi Choir, English Baroque Soloists.** John Eliot Gardiner conducts Bach's St Matthew Passion. Aug 18, 7pm.

**BBC Symphony Orchestra & Singers.** John Pritchard conducts Bellini's opera *I Capuleti ed i Montecchi*. Aug 21, 7.30pm.

**Glyndebourne Festival Opera** with the LPO give a semi-staged performance of Verdi's *Falstaff*. Aug 27, 7pm.

**Williams Fairey Engineering Band** give the first outdoor Prom. Aug 29, 1pm. Bandstand, Hyde Park.

**Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra.** Kurt Masur conducts two concerts: Beethoven's Egmont & Symphony No 7. Aug 30, 7.30pm; Mendelssohn, Rachmaninov, Strauss. Aug 31, 7pm.

### BARBICAN HALL

EC2 (638 8891, cc).

**London Sinfonietta.** Diego Masson conducts works by Turnage & Stravinsky. Electric Phoenix, directed by Terry Edwards, perform Wishart & Brooks. Aug 2, 7.45pm.

**King's Singers.** Derek Griffiths introduces a concert for young children. Aug 4, 3pm. Carl Davis conducts the Singers & the English Chamber Orchestra in *Songs of the Auvergne & America*. Aug 7, 7.30pm.

**Royal Philharmonic Orchestra** play Elgar, Britten & Vaughan Williams, under Vernon Handley. Aug 6, 8pm.

**LSO Summer Pops.** The orchestra is joined by Randy Crawford, John Dankworth, Cleo Laine, Marvin Hamlisch & others. Aug 10-23.

**New York Philharmonic Orchestra,** under Zubin Mehta, play Schubert's Symphony No 2 & Bruckner's Symphony No 4. Aug 24, 7.45pm.

**Academy of Ancient Music & Chorus** perform works by Haydn & a new edition of Mozart's Mass in C minor, under Christopher Hogwood. Aug 25, 7.45pm.

### FESTIVAL HALL

South Bank Centre, SE1 (928 3191, cc 928 8800).

**Peking Opera.** Dance, drama, acrobatics & comedy combined in a spectacular display of Chinese theatrical skills. Double bill: *The Monkey King & The Princess Red Fish*. Aug 15-28, 7.30pm; mats Aug 20, 27, 3pm.

### QUEEN ELIZABETH HALL

South Bank Centre.

**Electric Weekend.** Works by Stockhausen, Birtwistle, Maderna, Nono & other specialists in electronic music. Xenakis introduces his composition *La Légende d'Eer*. Aug 12-14.

**Schubert & Britten:** a feeling for music. A celebration of two kindred spirits, under the artistic direction of Jeffrey Tate. Opens with a semi-staged performance of Schubert's *Fierrabras* by the English Chamber Orchestra & Tallis Choir. Others taking part in the series include the Endellion String Quartet, Mitsuko Uchida, Raphael Wallfisch, Peter Donohoe, Felicity Lott, Robert Tear. Aug 18-27, daily.

### ST GILES

Cripplegate, EC2

Box office: Barbican (638 8891, cc).

**Lunchtime recitals** as part of the

Summer in the City programme. James Bowman, counter-tenor, Aug 1; King's Singers, Aug 2; Jane Parker Smith, organ, Aug 3; John Harle, saxophone, Aug 4; Henry Herford, baritone, Aug 5; 1 pm.

### ST MARTIN-IN-THE-FIELDS

Trafalgar Sq, WC2.

**Free lunchtime recitals** of chamber music every Mon & Tues. 1.05pm.

## OPERA

### ENGLISH NATIONAL OPERA

London Coliseum, St Martin's Lane, WC2 (836 3161, cc 240 5258).

**Carmen.** The season opens with a revival of David Pountney's production, set in a 20th-century used-car dump. Jean Rigby sings Carmen, with Jacques Trussel as José & Sergei Leiferkus as Escamillo. Aug 26, 30.

**Tosca.** Janice Cairns sings the title role in Jonathan Miller's production, which takes place in Rome during the Second World War. Edmund Barham sings Cavaradossi & Malcolm Donnelly is Scarpia. Aug 27, 31.

### GLYNDEBOURNE FESTIVAL OPERA

Glyndebourne, Lewes, E Sussex (0273 541111).

**La traviata.** Sian Edwards conducts Peter Hall's production, with Fiorella Pediconi as Violetta, Walter MacNeil as Alfredo & Timothy Noble as Germont père. July 26, 30, Aug 2, 5, 8, 11, 14, 17.

**Falstaff.** Peter Hall's new production, full of incident, in John Gunter's handsome sets. Well-balanced cast led by Claudio Desderi. July 28, Aug 1, 4, 9, 12.

**Ravel double bill.** Frank Corsaro's productions of *L'Enfant et les sortilèges* & *L'Heure Espagnole*, with designs by Maurice Sendak, conducted by Graeme Jenkins. July 29, 31, Aug 3, 6, 7, 10, 13, 15, 16, 18.

### NEW D'OYLY CARTE OPERA COMPANY

Cambridge Theatre, Earlham St, WC2 (379 5299, cc 240 7200).

**Gilbert & Sullivan's** operas return to London for a summer season. Peter Walker's production of *Iolanthe* is imaginative & amusing; *The Yeomen of the Guard* is more traditionally staged by Christopher Renshaw; Bramwell Tovey conducts. Until Sept 10.

## DANCE

**Amampondo.** Rated troupe of dancers & drummers from the townships of South Africa, with some traditional tribal rhythms. Spirited, visually arresting & great fun. Aug 8. Queen Elizabeth Hall, South Bank Centre, SE1 (928 3191, cc 928 8800).

**Australian Ballet.** Triple bill: *Beyond Twelve*, a London première choreographed by Graeme Murphy; *Orpheus; Forgotten Land*. Aug 1. Double bill: *Suite en blanc*, Serge Lifar's classic; Bédart's *Gaîté Parisienne*. Aug 2, 3, 6 (m&e). Triple bill, shared with the Sydney Dance Company, in celebration of the work of Graeme Murphy: *Gallery, Beyond Twelve, Shining*. Aug 4, 5. Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, WC2 (240 1066/1911, cc).

**Dance Theatre of Harlem.** World-famous New York company returns with seven different programmes, encompassing the classical ballets of George Balanchine & the jazz-oriented works of Geoffrey Holder. Never less than riveting. Aug 1 (Royal gala), 2-5, 6 (m&e), 7-13. London Coliseum, St Martin's Lane, WC2 (836 3161, cc).

**The Kirov Ballet** continue their London dates with *Le Corsaire*, directed by Oleg Vinogradov, Pepita's ballet based on a poem by Byron. Aug 9-12, 13 (m&e). Royal Opera House.

**London Festival Ballet.** *Swan Lake*, new production by prima ballerina Natalia Makarova. Aug 3, 4 (m&e). *La Sylphide*, choreographed by artistic director Peter Schaufuss. Aug 8-11. Quadruple bill: *Sphinx*, based on Cocteau's play *La Machine Infernale; Apollo*, George Balanchine's masterpiece; *Song of a Wayfarer*, a Bédart duet set to Mahler; *Symphony in C*, another Balanchine with music by Bizet. Aug 12, 13 (m&e). Royal Festival Hall, South Bank Centre.

**Marcel Marceau.** If the greasepaint has to cover a few wrinkles, Marceau remains the undisputed king of mime. Aug 16-Sept 3, mats Aug 20, 27, Sept 1, 3. Sadler's Wells, Rosebery Ave, EC1 (279 8919, cc).

**Zoots & Spangles.** Lively jazz-dance outfit who, with the help of the London Swing Orchestra, conjure up the 20s. Aug 28, noon. Terrace Foyer, Barbican, EC2 (638 8891, cc).





Shellfish and jellied eels galore for sale in Petticoat Lane, as they have been for years



Notting Hill, the capital's most colourful carnival, takes to the streets again

## LIST OF THE MONTH

### MARKET LONDON

There is no better way to spend a summer's day than at one of London's varied & lively markets (dippers like them too, so keep your hand firmly on your wallet):

**1 Billingsgate**, 87 West India Dock Rd, E14. Although it is technically a wholesale market, the public is allowed in by ancient charter. Sea creatures of all shapes & sizes. Tues-Sat 5-8am; Sun 6-8.30am (shellfish only).

**2 Camden**, Camden High St, NW1. The place for trendy 50s clothes (you, too, can look like a Levi advert); one stall even specialises in 50s swimwear. Sat, Sun 8am-6pm.

**3 Columbia Rd**, E2. More flowers than a gypsy funeral. Best bargains are bulbs & bedding plants, preferably bought in bulk. The sweetest-smelling market in town. Sun 8am-noon.

**4 Covent Garden**, The Piazza, WC2. Anything from jumpers to jewellery, usually home-made by stallholders. Very touristy, so prices tend to be high. Mon 9am-5pm (antiques); Tues-Sat 9am-5pm (crafts).

**5 Grays Indoor Antiques Market**, 58 Davies St, W1. Relive your childhood among the toy stalls. It is also the home of the Thimble Society of London. Tues-Sat 10am-6pm.

**6 Kensington**, 49-53 Kensington High St, W8. Buzzing indoor clothes market where bohemian young things sell their designs. Mon-Sat 10am-6pm.

**7 Leadenhall**, EC3. The City's up-market market: quality food—

pheasants, exotic cheeses, etc—at reasonable prices. Ornately decorated Victorian walkways add to the atmosphere. Mon-Fri 9am-5pm.

**8 Petticoat Lane/Brick Lane**, E1. Real-life Del-Boys in abundance, selling anything from cameras to canaries. The atmosphere is sometimes spoiled when Asian stallholders are terrorised by local fascists. Sun 7am-3pm.

**9 Portobello Road**, W11. Home to the strangest buskers in town: bizarre puppeteers & hippie electric guitarists. Rich counter-culture heritage gives it a unique feel. Mon-Sat 8am-4pm (vegetables); Sat 8am-4pm (antiques, clothes, records, vegetables).

**10 Walthamstow**, Walthamstow High St, E17. Europe's longest market is great for kitsch—plastic flowers, glazed fruit, etc. Andy Warhol would have loved it. Thurs-Sat 9am-5pm.

## OTHER EVENTS

**Cricket**: England versus the West Indies—5th Cornhill Insurance Test Match. Aug 4. The Oval, SE11 (735 4911).

**Greyhound Racing**: St Leger Final. Aug 12. Wembley Stadium, Middx (902 1234, CC 748 1414).

**Notting Hill Carnival**. Steel bands & reggae rhythms to keep those feet moving on the long trek around Ladbroke Grove. Aug. 28-29.

**London Festival of New Circus**. The South Bank's Jubilee Gardens will be transformed into a circus village with innovative performers from France, Spain, Canada, plus our own Circus Lumière & Ra Za Zoo. July 29-Aug 14. For details write to the festival office, 18b St Stephen's Ave, W12 8JH.

## BOOKS: THIS MONTH'S BEST SELLERS

### HARDBACK NON FICTION

1 (3) **Moonwalk** by Michael Jackson. Heinemann, £9.95. The book that tells almost nothing!

2 (1) **Wainwright in Scotland** by Alfred Wainwright. BBC, £14.95.

3 (—) **Never Despair: Winston Churchill 1945-65** by Martin Gilbert. Heinemann, £25.

4 (—) **Queen Mary's Dolls' House** by Mary Stuart-Wilson. Bodley Head, £15. Lutyens's fabulous dolls' house.

5 (9) **The Spanish Armada** by Colin Martin and Geoffrey Parker. Hamish Hamilton, £14.95. One of the best of current books on the subject.

6 (2) **Wisden Cricketers' Almanack 1988** edited by G. Wright. John Wisden, £16.50.

7 (—) **Grey is the Colour of Hope** by Irina Ratushinskaya. Hodder & Stoughton, £10.95. Heart-warming autobiography of a major poet.

8 (6) **The Drowned and the Saved** by Primo Levi. Michael Joseph, £10.95. Penetrating, balanced look at the motives of the rulers of Auschwitz.

9 (5) **Yamani: The Inside Story** by Jeffrey Robinson. Simon & Schuster, £14.95. Rise & fall of an oil sheik.

10 (—) **When the Fighting is Over** by John Lawrence. Bloomsbury, £12.95.

### PAPERBACK NON FICTION

1 (1) **Hip & Thigh Diet** by Rosemary Conley. Arrow Books, £2.50. As if the other bits don't need watching too.

2 (—) **Little Wilson & Big God** by Anthony Burgess. Penguin, £5.95. A disappointing autobiography from a major writer.

3 (2) **The Blind Watchmaker** by Richard Dawkins. Penguin, £4.95. Powerful look at the theory of evolution.

4 (—) **Proms Guide '88**. BBC, £1.50. Essential for the music lover.

5 (3) **The Fatal Shore** by Robert Hughes. Pan Books, £4.99. Robust picture of Australia.

6 (4) **The Last Emperor** by Edward Behr. Futura, £3.95. Background to the Bertolucci film about China's last emperor.

7 (—) **Cricket, XXXX Cricket** by Frances Edmonds. Pan Books, £2.99. Waspish account of that Australian tour.

8 (—) **Biko** by Colin Moods. Penguin, £4.05. More light on South Africa.

9 (—) **The Life of my Choice** by Wilfred Thesinger. Fontana, £5.95. What makes a great traveller.

10 (—) **Byron** by Frederick Raphael. Cardinal, £4.99. Brilliant biography.

### HARDBACK FICTION

1 (7) **Summer's Lease** by John Mortimer. Viking, £10.95. The dangers of taking a Tuscan holiday villa, deftly told.

2 (2) **Rock Star** by Jackie Collins. Heinemann, £10.95.

3 (1) **The Icarus Agenda** by Robert Ludlum. Grafton Books, £11.95. Exciting story set in the Middle East.

4 (3) **The Bonfire of the Vanities** by Tom Wolfe. Jonathan Cape, £11.95.

5 (—) **Rivals** by Jilly Cooper. Bantam Press, £10.95. Similar jaunty mixture as in its galloping predecessor.

6 (—) **To be the Best** by Barbara Taylor Bradford. Grafton Books, £11.95. Continuing story of the indomitable Harte family.

7 (—) **Medusa** by Hammond Innes. Collins, £10.95. A communist plot on Menorca is the background to this lively tale.

8 (9) **The Fifth Child** by Doris Lessing. Jonathan Cape, £9.95. The one who wrecks the happy family.

9 (5) **The Cold Moons** by Aeron Clement. Kindredson Publishing, £10.95. A badger's eye view of life.

10 (—) **Bluebeard** by Kurt Vonnegut, Jr. Jonathan Cape, £10.95. Apocalyptic farce.

### PAPERBACK FICTION

1 (10) **Rage** by Wilbur Smith. Pan Books, £3.99.

2 (—) **The Garden of Shadows** by Virginia Andrews. Fontana, £3.50.

3 (1) **Destiny** by Sally Beauman. Bantam Books, £3.95.

4 (—) **Sepulchre** by James Herbert. Coronet, £3.50. Yet another horrible thriller.

5 (2) **The Maid of Buttermere** by Melvyn Bragg. Sceptre, £3.95.

6 (—) **Sarum** by Edward Rutherford. Arrow Books, £4.50. The history of England through the eyes of Salisbury.

7 (3) **The Parson's Daughter** by Catherine Cookson. Corgi, £3.95.

8 (4) **Winter Hawk** by Craig Thomas. Fontana, £3.95. Is the Russian peace initiative honest? Here is one answer.

9 (—) **The Unbearable Lightness of Being** by Milan Kundera. Faber & Faber, £3.95. Marvellous example of this Czech exile's work.

10 (—) **Shan** by Eric Van Lustbader. Grafton Books, £3.95. Complicated Far Eastern thriller.

Information from Book Trust. Comments by Martyn Goff. Brackets show last month's position.



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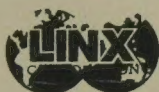
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# Letter from BRANDYWINE STREET

Nick Davies, Washington DC

The Queen of Sweden visited Texas earlier this year, and she was being shown around a hospital there when she asked the question that sooner or later comes to the lips of most visitors to the United States. "We have seen so many people who are very fat," she observed. "Why is that?"

The answer she got from her guide, Dr Michael DeBakey, was simple and unequivocal. "They eat too much," he said. And yet the honest doctor was only nibbling at the truth of the matter.

First, let us be clear: the Queen was right. These are fascinatingly fat people—one out of every three of them overweight, according to the National Research Council, and one out of four dangerously so.

The sight of Texans at the trough is particularly memorable. I watched them feeding recently in a hotel near Houston. First, a mature female sniffed out the buffet and then beckoned to her mate, an amiable hippo in Bermuda shorts, who waddled to her side. Soon they were filling their plates: half a dozen rashers of bacon, a couple of fried eggs, a handful of sausages, a few waffles, cheese sauce over the eggs, maple syrup over the bacon, and some buttered toast on the side. They were still loading up as other couples arrived, and soon the whole buffet was a wobbling wall of flesh. "Pass the cream . . . Try the pizza . . . Is there any more of that cheesecake?" This was only breakfast.

But the mere fact that Americans are greedy does not in itself explain why they have to indulge themselves in such a fattening fashion. The answer here, it seems to me, is that their diet is, in many ways, dangerously similar to the rest of their culture. Everything is for sale. Therefore, everything is designed for the mass market, which means instant gratification, the minimum of subtlety and the maximum of overstatement: it's Jimmy Swagart instead of the Archbishop of

Canterbury; it's *Dallas* instead of Dennis Potter; it's loud clothes, mawkish movies and crass politicians.

Americans sneer in disbelief at people who eat Rich Tea biscuits, for example, when they could be filling their faces with blueberry and cheese muffins. And why put salt on your peanuts when you could be roasting them in honey? And why cook steak unless you are going to flavour it with hickory-wood smoke? Everything must be instant and over-stated, a fact which is horribly exemplified by the work of Mr McDonald, the junk-food king.

Every 17 hours, somewhere on planet Earth, they open another McDonald's restaurant. There are already more than 10,000 of them. Since the first one was opened in April, 1955, Mr McDonald has sold 65 thousand million hamburgers; if you laid them all out side by side they would stretch to the moon and back 16 times. Last year McDonald's made a profit of \$590 million. By the best guess some 18 million Americans eat at McDonald's every day.

They opened a new McDonald's just outside Washington. Granted, it was their 10,000th. Even so, the affection and excitement with which they approached the occasion was mysterious to see. They surrounded the new restaurant with balloons clustered in the shape of the first McDonald's in Des Plaines, Illinois, and then,

with an explosion of fireworks, they released them to reveal the gleaming new wonder beneath. A few protesters waved signs. "Mc-Cancer, McDeath, McGreedy," they said. A crowd of chubby Americans jeered at them.

The Swedish Queen was worried, of course, not just because this excessive indulgence in mashed meat and sweeteners makes so many Americans look perverse and ugly, but because it tends to kill them—at the rate of about a million a year.

Yet Americans are notoriously health-conscious. Their scientists regularly investigate their diet and repeat dire warnings about heart disease. The National Research Council spent three years, for example, establishing that "nearly every American family" suffers health problems caused by their diet.

The *New York Times* list of the best-selling advice books has been headed for more than a year now by *The Eight-Week Cholesterol Cure*—"how to lower your blood cholesterol level without drugs"—followed by *Elizabeth Takes Off*, in which "Elizabeth Taylor relates her experiences in gaining and losing weight", and *Controlling Cholesterol*, in which Dr Kenneth H. Cooper offers his "programme to prevent heart disease through exercise and diet", all soon to be challenged by a new guide on how to cut cholesterol in

children whose arteries have already started to bung up with fat before they have even left school.

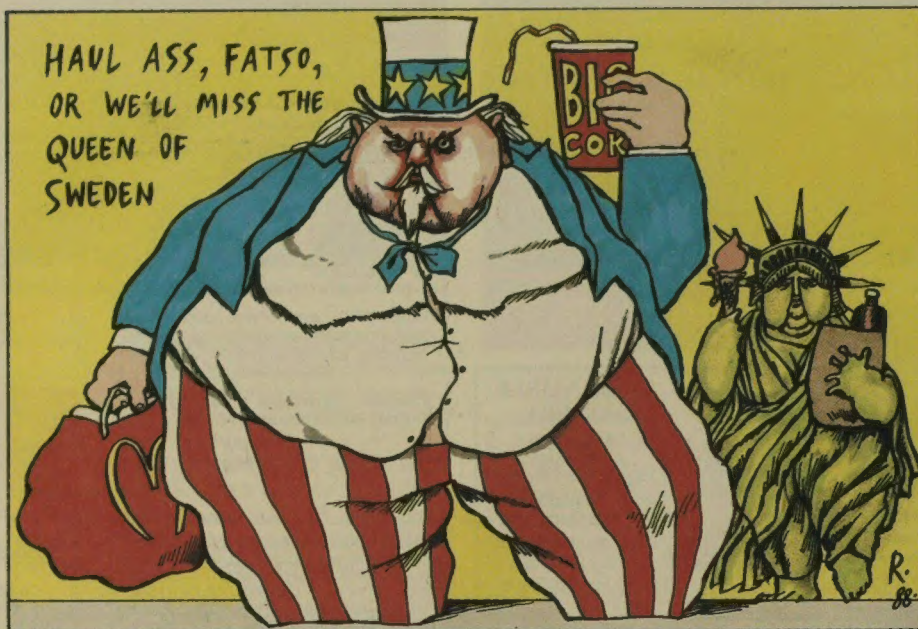
The back pages of newspapers are littered with advertisements inviting fat Americans to save their lives: "The lazy way to lose weight! . . . A short course on longevity! . . . Change your metabolism without shots, strict diets or exercise! . . . Lose up to 2 lb a day! . . . The fat-magnet—a totally new major scientific breakthrough!" Shopping malls routinely offer on-the-spot cholesterol tests in little booths.

However all this is, as they say, making a fat lot of difference.

American food production is geared towards fat. Meat producers get paid more for fat animals; milk producers get paid more for fatty milk; bologna and sausages which cut their fat content have to be sold as mere imitations.

Large parts of the American economy run on fat. McDonald's claim that seven per cent of Americans work for them at some time in their lives. In Detroit, when Fred Sanders Inc, the local confectioners, tried to close down, the people of the city devised a novel form of industrial action—a pig-in. They went in droves and bought up arm-loads of double-chocolate layer cakes, vanilla ice cream and cans of butterscotch sauce, a gesture of solidarity which succeeded in keeping the company afloat.

The Queen of Sweden politely suggested that her hosts should take more exercise. I prefer the approach of Robert Malone, aged 33, of New York City, who was arrested after a sequence of more than 50 armed robberies. Mr Malone turned out to be no ordinary heist-merchant. It transpired that every one of his victims was a confectioner, and he was a kind of Robin Hood, stealing from the fat to fill out the thin. "The cookies are garbage, and you have to pay too much for them," he shouted as they led him away in handcuffs. ●





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